





FLORENCE BECK











## BARCHESTER PILGRIMAGE

*By the same Author*

SANCTIONS

ESSAYS IN SATIRE

CALIBAN IN GRUB STREET

BROADCAST MINDS

THE MYSTERY OF THE KINGDOM

THE RICH YOUNG MAN

# BARCHESTER PILGRIMAGE

by  
RONALD A. KNOX

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## EXPLANATORY DEDICATION TO MAURICE BARING

DEAR MAURICE,

I owe you a deep debt of ingratitude for pointing out to me, when this book was nearly three parts written, that practically nobody would read it, because practically nobody had ever heard of Barchester.

Do you really suggest that we have got to tell people what the title means? To say that there was a man called Anthony Trollope, who was born in the year of Waterloo, and died in 1882—died of laughing at a new book called *Vice Versa*? That this man, however much you rank him below the Immortals, is *the* novelist of the Victorian era, because most of all he was its unconscious spokesman; and that among the great library of his writings, five novels are endeared beyond all others to those who read him, the five which centre round the imaginary Cathedral city of Barchester? Will it be any use to tell them all this, and give them a few more stray pieces of information such as would help them in a General Paper—as, that Mrs. Proudie, the Bishop's wife, henpecked him and tried to run the diocese for him; or that Mr. Harding, the

precentor, was the gentlest and most lovable of characters in fiction, or that Dr. Grantley, the Archdeacon, was a fine, domineering clergyman of the old school? Would such information help one who has never had the *entrée* of Courcy Castle, or strolled with the Archdeacon across Barchester Close or faced up to the anger of Lady Lufton in her "den" at Framley Park; or blushed and wept over the poverty of Hogglegstock Parsonage?

However, I dare say you are right in thinking that some kind of explanation is needed. To publish a book written entirely in the style of somebody else, when your reader is not expecting it, is to put yourself in the position of one who meets callers at the front door when he is dressed up in an eider-down and an old cavalry helmet to amuse the children. To be an ass in a lion's skin is dangerous work at the best of times; but you look even more of an ass if you are meeting people who have never heard of the lion. So I have done what you suggested, and explained it all in words of one syllable; only insisting that my explanation should take this dedicatory form. My readers may be few enough; but it will be something to have told my non-readers—the people who will put down the book in disgust at this point—that you think as poorly of them as I do, for taking so little interest in Trollope.

R. A. KNOX.

*Barchester,*  
*Feast of St. Ewold, 1935.*



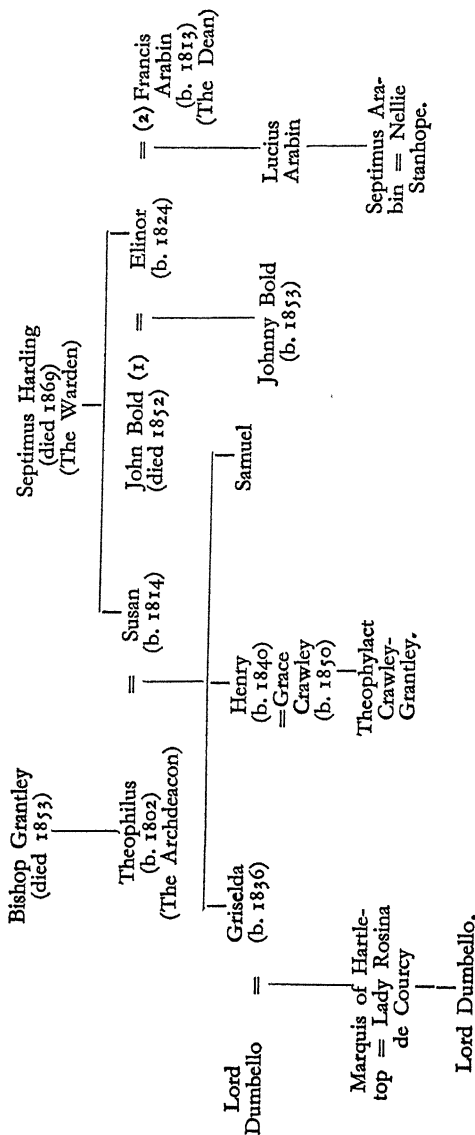




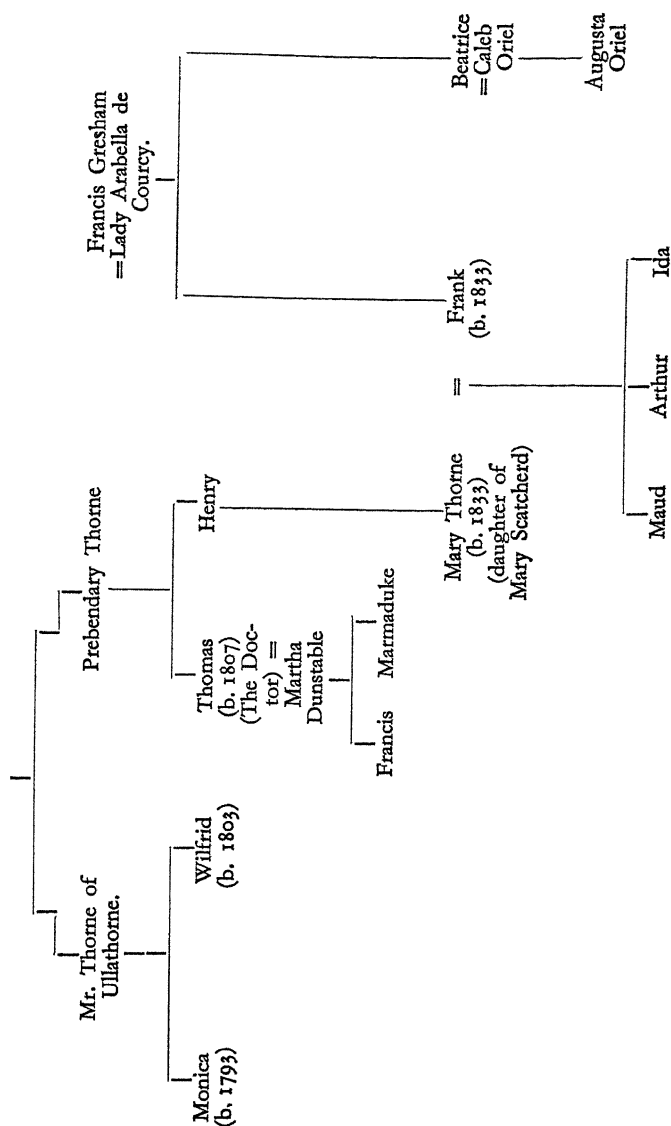
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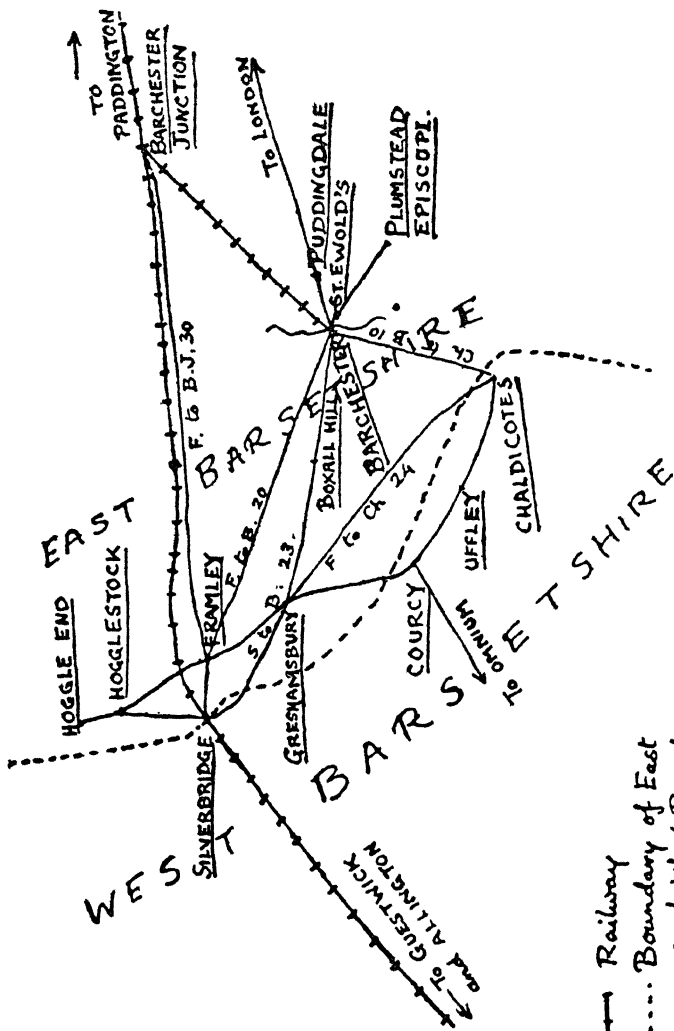
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# THE GRANTLEYS, ETC.



# THE THORNES AND THE GRESHAMS





 Railway  
 ..... Boundary of East  
 and West Barsel  
 ——— Roads

# BARCHESTER PILGRIMAGE

## PROLOGUE

I WROTE once that any attempt to continue the history of Barchester would certainly be written down a sacrilege. If the words should be brought up against me, I will justify myself by appealing to similar inconsistencies on the part of that earlier chronicler. Did he not, in *Dr. Thorne*, at the end of the second chapter, state that his hero "if I am rightly informed, never again made matrimonial overtures to anyone"; and did he not, in *Framley Parsonage*, record how that same hero made an offer, and an offer which was accepted, to Miss Dunstable? Did he not, close to the end of *Barchester Towers*, write the words "As for Mrs. Proudie, our prayers for her are that she may live for ever," and then, in *The Last Chronicles of Barset*, allow her to fall a victim to a heart attack, without so much as Dr. Fillgrave to close her eyes? The promises of authors are written in sand; they must be allowed their afterthoughts.

The truth is—or the fiction, if you will—that I have let myself fall into the same habit as that old chronicler: "To me Barset has been a real county,

and its city a real city; and the spires and towers have been before my eyes, and the voices of the people are known to my ears, and the pavements of the city ways are familiar to my footsteps." Barchester was a welcome escape from real life; like a fly in amber, it preserved for ever a moment of history. It was to me what the Grecian Urn was to Keats:

" Ah, happy, happy boughs, that cannot shed  
Your leaves, nor ever bid the spring adieu."

And then—I suppose I must have looked once too often—that image of a cathedral town began to flicker before my eyes; what had been a motionless piece of sculpture turned, all at once, into a news-reel. At first, you thought it might be merely an illusion that Archdeacon Grantley's shoulders were a little bowed; that Dr. Thorne's hair was grizzled; that Lady Lufton was really beginning to lean upon her stick. . . . Then the truth dawned (or the fiction, if you will); the world was moving, and Barchester had to move with it.

These are only vignettes of Barchester in movement. I have not attempted to give a history of the place; to trace tendencies, or estimate forces. Gossip about people is all you must expect to find here; Barchester was always a place for gossip. If you ask what were my sources of information, I will refer you predominantly to Mr. BUNCE, that senior verger who is so well-known a figure to all



worshippers at the Cathedral. I do not know Mr. Bunce's exact age; and the most hardened of American visitors might well feel a delicacy about catechizing him on the subject. But it is certain that he claims to have witnessed Mr. Harding's funeral; and that is sixty-six years ago. He is nephew to that Mr. John Bunce who was present on the same occasion as a very old man, and was the last left of Hiram's bedesmen. Mr. Albert Bunce, my own friend, sang in the choir as a boy; and if it is true that he assisted in that capacity at the wedding of Mrs. Tickler, "Miss Olivia Proudie that was," he must be fully eighty-five. Poor Mr. Bunce! He has seen this house in its first glory, and how does he see it now? That is, continually, the burden of his lamentation; he is not comforted by the "doing up" of the chapels, with testers and dossals and riddels and all that the present Dean's soul loves. "The place ain't what it used to be, and folk don't come to it as they used to come to it." If, then, any impression is conveyed in the following pages that what has altered in Barchester has mostly altered for the worse, let it be remembered that my chief informant is a very old man, with an old man's love of the past, and distrust of novelty.

But of course Mr. Albert Bunce is not my only authority. Among the others, too numerous to mention, I will only specify one, an old lady who lived to be a centenarian, and died in 1926, with her faculties, at least her intellectual faculties, unimpaired. This was Eleanor Arabin, formerly Mrs.

Bold, formerly Miss Harding. Daughter of a precentor, widow of a dean, sister-in-law of an archdeacon, and aunt of a bishop, all of whom exercised their ministry in Barchester, she was herself an epitome of Cathedral history; and if her diary had been preserved, this book need not have been written. Those who have studied her earlier history do not need to be told that she looked upon changes in Barchester with a kindlier eye; she never ceased to be a romanticist.

When I speak of changes, I am not, of course, suggesting that Barchester ever became a home of rash experiments, or that its atmosphere even now is one of hectic excitement. Indeed, Barchester during the 'seventies scarcely shewed, to the outward eye, any difference from its former self. Dr. Proudie, it is true, did not long hold the reins of office after the loss of that helpmeet of his, who was such an adept at the methods of dual control. But Dr. Deadletter, who succeeded him on his retirement, was of the same school and continued the same policy, notably where ritualistic practices were concerned; on the other hand, he was not a strong enough man to counteract the prevailing tendency of theology in the diocese, which was still that of Archdeacon Grantley and Dean Arabin. One new departure, by general admission a regrettable one, was, however, made during this period. The stone in the West front of the Cathedral had long been crumbling; and the chapter, instead of being content to reface it, had the whole front rebuilt by an architect whose

name stood high in public estimation, Mr. Cheesemeadow. I am glad to say that Mr. Cheesemeadow built in stone; but he chose for his purpose a dull, yellowish stone which took a good deal of polish when dressed, and the result was a very shiny and monotonous surface. Nor have subsequent generations been able to discover the meaning or the usefulness of the two large pepper-pots (as they are generally called) with which he decorated the corner towers. Meanwhile, he failed to discover the beginnings of that settlement in the foundations of the building, which called for such expensive underpinning when Dean Plumblin had to deal with it, at the beginning of the present century.

One further piece of cultural history needs to be recorded. It will be remembered that, when Mrs. Proudie died, her husband put up a monument to her in the Cathedral: there was a broken column, and on the column simply the words "My beloved wife!"—then there was a slab by the column, bearing Mrs. Proudie's name, with the date of her life and death. Beneath this was the common inscription "*Requiescat in pace.*" I need hardly say that the Papistical nature of this last sentiment gave great offence in Barchester, especially among Mrs. Proudie's own admirers. And when Bishop Proudie himself died, as he did shortly after his retirement, first of all the chancellor was induced to order the removal of the slab, as being offensive to pious eyes, and then a subscription was set on foot to erect a more elaborate memorial altogether, worthy of her

who, while she lived, had been such a power for righteousness in Barchester. The subscription list was more widely signed than its promoters anticipated; and Mrs. Thorne of Chaldicotes, who as Miss Dunstable had been much in Mrs. Proudie's society, gave five hundred pounds towards the project.

With such resources, the committee decided to obtain the best talent possible; and for this purpose they invited sculptors to submit designs competitively, without putting their names to them. The artist selected was an Englishman living in Italy, who had not hitherto made much name for himself, though his success at Barchester brought in more orders than he knew how to deal with. His design, which has now replaced the broken column and slab set up by Bishop Proudie, represents two angels weeping over a distaff, beside which stands an hour-glass, with the sands just running out. The distaff was not, at least in Mr. Crawley's judgment, the implement in whose use Mrs. Proudie excelled. Nevertheless, it is the appropriate symbol of womanhood; and the artist was understood to mean, that with Mrs. Proudie died that true womanliness which belonged to her period. An inscription below, far more ambitious than the old one, describes the deceased lady as one in whom "the arts and graces of social life were so combined with Christian fortitude and unswerving devotion to principle, as to make posterity envy what her contemporaries regret."

Both the carving and the inscription have been variously criticized by succeeding generations. At the time, admiration was universal; then, as the Gothic tide swept remorselessly over Barchester, the public taste changed, and it became the fashion to decry them. Mr. Finial, the eminent art critic, told us in one of his books that the whole thing was "a leprous sore on the delicate features of one of the noblest of man's inventions." To-day, we treat these relics of the Victorian age as things of curious interest, if not actually of beauty; and Mrs. Proudie's monument has appeared as an illustration to more than one work of "period" literature. These authors do not always remember to supply the detail which, to our mind, is the most significant of all—the name of the sculptor. The successful candidate was an English artist living in Italy, by the name of Ethelbert Stanhope. And this gentleman, it will be remembered, did not depend upon hearsay for his knowledge of Mrs. Proudie's character. They had met at that famous evening party in the palace at Barchester, when he, dressed in light blue from head to foot, tried to repair the ravages made upon Mrs. Proudie's dress by the sudden moving of the Signora's sofa, until he was discouraged by the warning voice, "Unhand it, sir!" Yes, Ethelbert Stanhope had met Mrs. Proudie more than once, for was not his father a prebendary of the diocese? For those who knew both of them, the insoluble question remains—How much did Ethelbert Stanhope design the monument with his tongue in his cheek?

There, anyhow, the distaff remains, and stone tears cling like limpets to the angels' cheeks; this at least does not change with Barchester. Whether posterity ought to view Mrs. Proudie's character with envy or with some other attitude of mind, it is not for me to determine. But of this at least I am sure, that if any ghosts walk in Barchester cloisters, none walks more uneasily than hers.

## THE LOVES OF JOHNNY BOLD

"I WILL leave it," writes my author, "to some other pen to produce, if necessary, the biography of John Bold the Younger."

Would that it were unnecessary! For with that biography, as the reader will see for himself, the Time-Spirit enters into the history of Bassetshire. Till then, all events had moved in a beatific cycle, which returned upon itself continually. The Bishop, indeed, was a bishop of the new school; but when Mr. Slope had been given his *cong  *, and Mrs. Proudie had taken her place among the immortals, what could the Bishop do, being the man you wot of? The Dean belonged to the straitest sect of orthodoxy; the Archdeacon still ruled, his influence undiminished by time. The Greshams, that had been poor, were rich beyond all their needs; Mark Robarts, that had been bankrupt, was solvent once more. Mr. Crawley could at last make both ends meet; Lily Dale remained perpetually marriageable, and Johnny Eames perpetually loyal to her love. The two families of Thorne, from Ullathorne and Chaldicotes, were reconciled after long estrangement; nor was Chaldicotes, in the end, disgracefully ceded to

the Omnium property. And if, with the poet, we apostrophize the Muse of history,

Say first, what cause  
Moved our grandparents, in that happy state,  
Favour'd of heaven so highly, to fall off,

we shall find, in the history of John Bold the Younger, the first premonitory symptoms of the decline.

He was born, it will be remembered, in the year 1852; he was but an infant, therefore, when Mary Thorne married Frank Gresham, was still trundling a hoop when Griselda Grantley became Lady Dumbello. But time passes, and when it was triumphantly proved, to the satisfaction of all right-minded people in the county, that Mr. Crawley did not steal the Dean's wife's cheque, little Johnny Bold, the Dean's wife's son, was already grown to be a big Johnny Bold at a famous public school, and was there preparing himself to matriculate at his step-father's University of Oxford, and to enter his name at his step-father's College of Lazarus. The death of Dr. Gwynne fell about this time; and although it was confidently expected that Tom Staples, who had so long been the power behind the throne, would step into his shoes, Tom Staples, to the surprise of all the world, refused. The University reforms which were introduced about that time had been too much for his honest Tory sympathies; and he sought, in the seclusion of a country living, to cheat himself into the fancy that Oxford still stood where it had stood in the 'sixties.



Hence, even in that preserve of orthodoxy, Lazarus, new men began to make their mark, and a new spirit got abroad, so that Archdeacon Grantley shook his head more than once, and asked what things were coming to. Nevertheless, it is difficult to imagine how Lazarus, even in the days of its degeneracy, could have infected Johnny Bold with those germs of infidelity which his residence at Oxford certainly left in him.

It was the general opinion in Barchester that his restless mind had taken a wrong turning even earlier than that. I have myself heard two quite different accounts of the matter. For you must know that in the late 'nineties there was much difference of opinion among Barchester folk, some of whom were for putting everything down to Heredity, while others would have it that the only considerable influence on men's lives was that of Environment. Which two scientific terms they used, without any clear definition of what they meant by them; but in the late 'nineties to talk science in Barchester was as fashionable a thing as it had been, in the 'seventies, very reprehensible and almost *haeresi proximum*. Those, then, who were for Heredity pointed out that, after all, Johnny Bold was only a chip of the old block; his father had been a pestilent reformer, and had been at the root of all the trouble which led to the Government's interfering in the affairs of Hiram's Hospital; a doctor, too, and one who scandalized medical opinion by setting up his brass plate when there

were already nine medical men attending to the wants of the Cathedral Close. And although Eleanor Bold, who became Eleanor Arabin, was universally loved in the town and lived to a great age as one of its citizens, still you had to remember that she was always fond of espousing unpopular causes, and very ready to excuse the ill-doings of her friends, or indeed of anybody she heard spoken against. Was it not she, long ago, who looked for a moment as if she meant to doff her widow's cap in reply to the advances of such a man as Mr. Slope?

The partisans of environment had, it must be confessed, more difficulty in proving their case. For was not Johnny Bold brought up in all the purple and fine linen of an English deanery; and had he not, for his step-father, a clergyman of great earnestness, who was at the same time a paragon of scholarship? It is, moreover, on record that the promise which Francis Arabin made to his betrothed at Ullathorne Court, "he shall be all as my own," was a promise rigorously kept, nor did he ever make more of his own children than of this little stranger. But no boy in such a position (so these gossips said) can really grow up without becoming conscious of his own unwantedness; and all his childish quarrels (for he was, it must be confessed, a quarrelsome lad) must have deepened in him this faint sense of hostility towards the Arabins and all the Arabins stood for. Further, Archdeacon Grantley was, till the end of his life, a frequent visitor at the house

of his sister-in-law; and Archdeacon Grantley's distrust of Whigs and of liberal thinkers grew, towards the end of his life, into a rage of fanaticism. Half an hour of Archdeacon Grantley on the University Commission was enough, it may be surmised, to have turned the infant Timothy himself into a rampant Socinian. Such allocutions, only half understood but resented from sheer weariness, may well have predisposed Johnny to ask himself questions, and to turn for an answer to other counsellors.

Mr. Bunce, who is, as I have said, my principal informant about old things in Barchester, has a more ambitious theory. To explain it, I have to go far back into history, and even, as will be seen, prehistory.

. . . . .

Over one point, I am sorry to say, it is necessary to accuse my author of concealment. In the old days, before the Hanoverian Georges sat firmly on the throne of England, Bassetshire was a great place for Popish recusants, who held out in little nooks and corners of the country, wherever they had a squire to protect them. And although, after the failure of the Old Pretender's invasion, the numbers of these people dwindled greatly, so that in less than a century scarce a fifth of them remained, Barchester itself was not without its quota; and perhaps there were more of them than their neighbours reckoned with, for they were quiet folk, and none too anxious to draw attention to themselves.

Indeed, when a certain French *émigré* priest laboured among them at the beginning of the century, he had a parish of some five or six hundred souls; and this sum increased a little in the years that followed (though not, you may be sure, through perversions among the Protestant townspeople) under the reign of his English successor, Dr. Catacomb.

Nevertheless, although I blame my author for a historical omission, I have no doubt that he was justified artistically; for in a place like Barchester any religious minority must needs be out of the picture. The Romish chapel was tucked away in a side street in the very poorest quarter of the town, looking as unlike a church as it could manage, though the narrow lancet windows might have caused it to be mistaken for a charity school. It was small, and poky, and uncomfortable; the sacristy was always damp, and Dr. Catacomb had to burn a fire in it on Sundays to keep the mildew away from his vestments; the plaster on the walls was much grimed, and seemed in places to be peeling away. Yet somehow I was fond of this frowsty, ramshackle old place, with its tawdry finery, its crazy galleries, its smell of incense and candle-grease, its red plush cushions, its glimmering darkness, its air of furtive seclusion; and though we needs must love the highest when we see it, and Mr. Pugin has taught us that crockets and ogees and imitation Gothic at half a crown a yard are the highest, I for one never feel quite so well at ease in the modern church of St.

Philomena, which they have erected near the railway station.

Into the old church Dr. Catacomb fitted perfectly; for he too was a museum piece, belonging to a past age. In person he was tall and of massive build: his face fresh-complexioned, and almost free from wrinkles, even in old age; his grey hair hung down in a roll over his neck, longer than clerical usage permits. He wore a long, high-breasted frock coat, and a decent chimney-pot hat when he went abroad; his white neckcloth was exactly of the same fashion as that patronized by the Cathedral clergy, nor would he ever consent to wear a "Roman" collar, to the end of his days. His piety was that of his ancestors, and he had never been out of England in his life. He took snuff, did Dr. Catacomb, an indulgence which was not regarded as genteel in Barchester, and there was a certain directness of speech about him which would have disqualified him, religion apart, from admittance into the more select circle of the Cathedral close. But he had a pretty taste in claret, and it was not only the professional men, Mr. Chadwick the lawyer and Mr. Forrest the bank manager, that got the benefit of this. Sir Harkaway Gorse was one of his parishioners, and it was whispered that Wilfrid Thorne of Ullathorne, unknown to his sister, would sometimes fit his legs in under the presbytery table. It was chiefly, however, among the poor that he was known. His own congregation stood in great awe of him; yet he was loved among them, as a man who visits the sick, and

remembers faces, and stops to play games with children in the gutter, will always be loved.

With all this, it may surprise you to hear that Dr. Catacomb was a learned man. He belonged to the school of Dr. Lingard and Squire Waterton; and his favourite study was that of fossils, geological strata, cromlechs, dolmens, and antiquarian subjects generally. Which is the reason for his intrusion into our present narrative. For he it was, long ago—you must understand that I am going back, now, beyond the reign of Bishop Proudie, beyond even the beginnings of the Hospital business—who, taking his constitutional one afternoon, sheltered from the rain in an old cave not far from the city, a little way beyond St. Ewold's. This cave had been known to the inhabitants of Barchester from time immemorial, and they described it as Robin Hood's Kitchen or Merlin's Parlour, according to their sense of antiquity. But a certain fissure in the wall of it, due to a long spell of dry weather, made it possible for Dr. Catacomb to penetrate further into it than any living man had yet penetrated, and there find (or so he said) drawings on the walls which must needs date from a period older than any at which our island was hitherto known to be inhabited.

These discoveries, made public by Dr. Catacomb in a learned periodical, had no effect on the scientific world whatsoever. In those days, men of science were not interested in the age of the earth, or of man, other branches of learning shewing more

promise of a career. But, some twenty years afterwards, when similar discoveries had been made elsewhere, the Barchester Cave was examined afresh, and most disquieting conclusions drawn from it. Not only had these pictures failed to get washed away by Noah's Flood, but it appeared, from the character of the rocks on which they were inscribed, that the artist must have lived considerably before Adam. It was felt to be singularly incongruous that subversive records of this kind should be found in the neighbourhood of a city whose theological traditions were so orthodox; and almost equally so that a clergyman—although, to be sure, his ordination was of a dubious foreign kind—should have been the first to make them public. Some did not hesitate to aver that the paintings were a fraud, that Dr. Catacomb himself was their author, and that his motive was to discredit the sacred Scriptures, of which, it was well-known, every Romish priest was the enemy. Even those who took a milder view of his delinquency were agreed that it would have been more becoming in him as a clergyman to hush the matter up.

Now, it is certain that Johnny Bold, when a boy, was fond of playing in Merlin's Parlour, between the time of Dr. Catacomb's discovery and the time when its investigation by competent scientists had made it famous throughout Europe. So that Mr. Bunce may be in the right of it when he declares that it was the contemplation of these wall-paintings which first made him doubt the Scriptures, to his

manifest undoing. At the same time, it is fair to say that nearly all the boys of his age in Barchester were in much the same case; nor did Samuel Grantley, for example, ever set foot on the downward path of infidelity, despite his early acquaintance with Robin Hood's Kitchen.

. . . . .

Be that as it may, it is certain that Johnny Bold did come away from Oxford imbued with a set of very dangerous notions. Even when he took his pass degree in the humanities, before proceeding to medicine, he was already convinced, with Mr. Darwin, that Man was never the subject of a special creation, having developed out of some hitherto unknown species of monkey in the most natural way in the world; that Archbishop Ussher was very badly out in his calculations about the date of Genesis; that "these German fellows" had shown good reason for doubting the accuracy of the Gospels; and finally (what was perhaps a worse blasphemy than the foregoing, to Barchester ears) that the Apostolic succession was a highly disputable affair. It is true that there were already those, even in Barchester itself, who leaned towards the new ideas, and tried to reconcile them in some sort with their adhesion to the Thirty-nine Articles; men whom Dr. Proudie had brought into the diocese, and whose delight in putting down the Grantleyites made them capable of accepting Greek gifts from the misguided gentlemen who wrote in *Essays and*



*Reviews.* But on the whole Barchester remained true to its old loyalties; and above all, what was to be done when such a cuckoo raised its head in the comfortable nest of the Deanery?

I do not mean to say that the young man's state of mind was, from the first, known and discussed over the teatable of Barchester. When he first admitted it to his mother, she discussed it, to be sure, with her husband, but she would let it go no further, although the Dean was for submitting the difficulty at once to the oracle of Plumstead. Dean Arabin was, if anything, an over-conscientious man; and although in his youth he had been an uncompromising champion of orthodoxy, riper years found him less confident in his own opinion, and more eager, therefore, to canvass the opinion of others. Like many men who always see two sides to a question, he loved to discharge his conscience by leaning on the counsel of those who saw only one. Archdeacon Grantley still reigned at Plumstead Episcopi; he was over seventy now, but his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated; unlike the oracles of old, he never found it needful to wrestle with any Pythian vapours before making up his mind, on matters ecclesiastical at any rate. But Eleanor was firm; to tell the Archdeacon, she said, could only do harm; it would certainly do no good.

Unfortunately, she reckoned without that partiality for religious gossip which has dominated the University of Oxford from Dr. Newman's times to these. Some correspondent, from that city of

dreaming spires and whispering galleries, informed the Archdeacon that mischief was afoot; and the old man, without hesitation, girded himself for a last act of interference. But first, from long habit, he opened his heart to the wife of his bosom.

"John," he said one morning after breakfast, "has been making a fool of himself."

Susan Grantley, when she heard that a young gentleman at the University had been making a fool of himself, looked for one of two possible explanations. Either he had been indulging immoderately in the pleasures of the table, and had had the misfortune to attract the attention of authority by his subsequent behaviour; or he had been beguiled by one of those local Circes who threaten the unwary voyager at the outset of his Odyssey. "I trust it is nothing disgraceful," she said; meaning thereby, that she inclined to the former alternative.

"Disgraceful!" repeated the Archdeacon; "Disgraceful is no word for it. I am only thankful your poor father was spared this." Though indeed, it was not so much from the behaviour of his family that poor Mr. Harding suffered in life, as from the steps which the Archdeacon himself saw fit to take in consequence. "He has turned atheist," the Archdeacon added; for Oxford gossip generally gives full value to a story, and Archdeacon Grantley was not the man to fence in his meaning with any saving clauses.

"John!" exclaimed Mrs. Grantley; "impossible!"

"Nothing is impossible," retorted the Archdeacon, "since they abolished the test, and threw the University open to every Jew, Papist and infidel who covets a scholarship. This is the harvest Dr. Proudie and his friends are reaping, and I wish them joy of it. But that Eleanor's child, that a scholar of Lazarus, should go back on the lessons of his catechism—that is well-nigh past belief. You will remember, I always said there was bad blood in the Bolds."

Mrs. Grantley remembered nothing of the kind, but she was too prudent to stop her husband in mid career. "But, Archdeacon," she said, "what will you do?"

"Do? Why, what is there to be done? Eleanor was always weak, and your poor father never controlled her properly. She was allowed to marry Bold, because he retired from his interference in the affairs of the Hospital; and it's my belief that she'd have been allowed to marry him, and would have married him, even if he'd persisted in trying to turn your father out of house and home. A cheap jack surgeon, setting the bones of every radical scoundrel in Barchester for nothing, and then a Jacobin, howling for the revenues of the Church—what can you expect of such a marriage as that? What's bred in the bone—it's the old story; of course Johnny is got hold of by the Socinians before he is turned twenty-one. It's Arabin I'm sorry for; he's not to blame; upon my word he's not to blame. I must go over and see him;

have the goodness to order the carriage, Susan. There may be time to do something yet."

But Mrs. Grantley was better able to rule her husband in his old age than formerly. "You forget, Archdeacon; the horses were over at Greshamsbury yesterday. You had much better let me talk to Eleanor when she comes over this afternoon. After all, it is her business chiefly; and I think she will take it better as coming from me. But you must think what you propose to do about it. It is no good lecturing Eleanor; she will only be up in arms."

"I can hardly suppose that your sister will take up arms in defence of atheism, and tell us that we are all monkeys," rejoined the Archdeacon with warmth. "She is certainly weak, but thank God she has always been a churchwoman. By all means talk to her, if you will; and let her know that Johnny cannot be received at Plumstead until he recants. I will not have my pheasants shot by an unbeliever, and you must tell her so plainly."

The coverts at Plumstead are excellent, and an invitation to shoot them is not often refused by the gentry of the neighbourhood. But it did not seem likely that one who was undaunted by the theological perils attaching to an apostasy would be deterred by the additional inconvenience of being unable to get at the Archdeacon's birds. Perhaps the Archdeacon felt this, for he added, crossing over to the fire and spreading his coat-tails in front

of it as his custom was, "He ought to go out to the Colonies." Let Barchester at least, he seemed to say, be delivered from this pollution; the disgrace will be easier for his family to bear, if he goes out to exchange heresies with Bishop Colenso.

Mrs. Grantley, however, demurred. "My dear Archdeacon, you must remember that the Arabins are not rich. With their own family to look after, they have not much to spare; and there is very little left of John Bold's money." For the Dragon of Wantly had been sold not long before, and the purchase-money of it unfortunately invested.

"Tell her, then, that I will see the boy set up in the Colonies out of my own purse. I have not long to live now; and you and the children, thank God, are comfortably provided for. I never liked the boy, but I would do more for him if I could save the scandal this news will raise. He is your flesh and blood, after all."

And this proposition Mrs. Grantley did make to her sister the same afternoon, though with some misgivings over the success of her mission. The misgivings, I am sorry to say, were well grounded. "I am sure the Archdeacon means nothing but what is kind," said Eleanor. "But I cannot consent to have my son treated as a leper merely because he has picked up some foolish ideas at Oxford. The offer of partnership which Dr. Fillgrave has made is an excellent one; he is an old man, and his practice is still flourishing. Johnny, if he gets his degree, will come to live in Barchester; and I have very little

doubt he will live down these foolish notions of his, if he is not wantonly provoked by his own flesh and blood." And there was an end of it.

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There was an end of it, because, a few weeks after making this offer, Archdeacon Grantley took to his bed with a chill, and died quietly, not long afterwards, in his sleep. His children were present at his death-bed, excepting always Griselda, who was entertaining company at Hartletop; she sent, however, a very handsome wreath. The old man's last hours were unclouded by regrets and uncertainties; his mind moved much in the past, and once, when he was told the Bishop had called, he asked whether Mrs. Proudie had been with him? Then, recollecting himself, he added, "Ah, but she is dead; I never liked her while she lived, but I dare say she meant no harm." So he died, and all Barchester went to his funeral; it was conducted by his old friend the Dean, and by Mr. Crawley of St. Ewold's, whose daughter was married to his son Henry; and if it be any comfort to those who have passed away, to know that they were followed to the tomb by loyal affection and honest regret, our friend had that comfort in abundant measure.

He was a man who had done great good in Barchester, after the fashion of his day; standing up to his equals, and using the advantages which wealth and position gave him to shepherd his poorer neighbours into the ways of goodness. And if he was,

sometimes, too confident of his own judgment, too unwilling to do justice to the motives of his adversaries, it is to be remembered in his favour that he was one to whom weaker men were constantly looking for guidance—his father, his father-in-law, and finally Dean Arabin. When he died, this gentleman found it harder than ever to settle his own difficulties of conscience; and most of all in respect of the question, What was to be done with Johnny Bold? In the end, it hardly needs to be said, the mother triumphed. About the middle of the 'seventies, Johnny Bold came to practise in Barchester as the partner of Dr. Fillgrave; nor was it long before that eminent physician was found knocking at the same door through which he had so often ushered his patients, leaving our hero his own master and very comfortably off so far as his worldly prospects were concerned.

Moreover, for the present his mother's confidence seemed to be fully justified. The world of Barchester demanded no more of him than that he should be a physician worthy to step into Dr. Fillgrave's shoes; it did not manifest any curiosity about his private beliefs. When a dangerous fever was raging, it became known that Dr. Bold was the best man to keep it at bay and to secure a recovery—for these were days long before Dr. Killgerm and Dr. Motherwell, when Barchester was not noted for its medical skill. People had confidence in Dr. Bold's sudorifics, and they did not ask what his views might be on theological matters, nor was he

at pains to spread the information. To be sure, he was not very often seen at church; but then we all know that a doctor's time is not his own—it may be added that other young gentlemen in Barchester were beginning to fall into the same habits, with less excuse. The heavy hand of Dr. Grantley once withdrawn, there were not a few reprobates who found bed on Sunday morning, and a tobacco-pipe over the fire on Sunday evening, preferable to the long sermons which were then still in vogue at all the parish churches. Sometimes, however, Mr. Bunce tells me, young Johnny was to be seen at the very back of the Cathedral when his step-father was preaching at the evening service; and I doubt not that there was confidence between the two men, and that Johnny was not altogether uninfluenced by the solid arguments which Dean Arabin, with the Fathers at his elbow, would propound to him.

But other disturbing causes were at work in the nation generally, which had their repercussion even in Barchester. The new thinkers were no longer content with demonstrating to us, in their scientific lecture-rooms, new theories about animal life and the world's origin from which we might, if we would, draw unwelcome conclusions. There were others who openly got up on platforms and contradicted the most elementary notions of religion; of whom several were doubtless more clever, but none attracted more attention, than the Member of Parliament for Northampton. And when, at the



beginning of the 'eighties, that gentleman refused to be sworn in with any religious ceremony before taking his seat in the House, and claimed the right to affirm, the subsequent debate upon his behaviour was followed no less eagerly in Barchester than elsewhere. It was too much for our hero; he was carried away by the heat of the conflict, and, to the manifest prejudice of his prospects, declared himself openly on the side of the blasphemer.

I do not, myself, attach much importance to the arguments I have mentioned above, by which some would prove that the whole theological bent of Johnny Bold's mind was predetermined for him by his ancestry. Any young man of his time might, in his position, have imbibed the ideas which were then becoming common among men of learning. But, if Johnny Bold had not been the son of his father—and perhaps we may add, if Johnny Bold had not been the son of his mother—he would have been content to keep those ideas in his pocket, instead of feeling it incumbent upon himself to air them in the press, and at a series of public meetings, when he was just building himself up a reputation as a doctor in a clerical city like Barchester. His father was that restless reformer who had insisted on a public enquiry into the management of Hiram's Hospital; and his mother was that generous woman who had not feared to stand up for a man like Mr. Slope, when Mr. Slope was at his most unpopular. It was partly, perhaps, through inherited temperament that he was not content to sit down and

remind himself that, after all, if all religion is nonsense, nothing matters very much. It mattered to him enormously, to convince people that religion was untrue.

Then, indeed, Barchester did begin to take notice; and very solemn were the headshakings that went on over the teatable in the close. As Mrs. Grey said to Mrs. Green, Was it safe to let yourself be doctored by a man who might be trying to turn you into a monkey all the time? You must know that Johnny had by now been deprived of his natural protectors; Dean Arabin, perhaps fortunately for himself, had but lately accepted of a bishopric in another part of England; and, although his name was still honoured, he could hardly extend his aegis over such delinquencies on the part of his stepson. So Barchester did begin to take notice, and not a few among the more orthodox, who had hitherto called in Dr. Bold to treat their ailments, now preferred the good offices of Dr. Hummel-Haw, for all that he was known to be a vastly inferior practitioner. Indeed, it may be said that some of them regarded it as a kind of constructive martyrdom, to deny themselves the services of the atheist Bold; though you may be sure that no suspicion of the kind ever entered into the mind of Dr. Hummel-Haw—the account he gave of it was that people were beginning to realize quackery was quackery, and the old ways were best. Be that as it may, Dr. Hummel-Haw's balance at the bank was nearly quadrupled; and poor Johnny had to sell his

horse, and make his rounds on foot like a common apothecary.

He was not, however, altogether deserted; for the fever shewed as yet no signs of abating, and wherever its presence was suspected, you would find people sending for Dr. Bold in a hurry, on the ground that you could not expect immediate attention from a gentleman so busy as Dr. Humme-Haw. Martyrdom was all very well, but it was a taste that might easily be carried too far. And among those who sent for our friend in this way, although they belonged to the circle of the very elect, were Mr. Oriel and his wife Beatrice, when their daughter Augusta took to her bed. For Mr. Oriel had been prevailed upon, with some difficulty, to leave his comfortable parsonage at Greshamsbury, and Mrs. Oriel to leave the neighbourhood of her dear friend Mary Gresham, when a prebend fell vacant in the city of Barchester, and they now ranked among the pillars of Cathedral society. It is true Mr. Oriel's churchmanship was not quite so pronounced as in the old days, when he went over to say matins on those dark winter mornings, and his high waistcoats shocked the people of Greshamsbury. But he was a safe man, and it needed some pressure from the agitated Beatrice before he would consent to fetch in a doctor who had gone so sadly astray in the matter of Adam's rib.

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Augusta Oriel was the paragon among all the young ladies of Barchester. If her father had

declined somewhat from his early fervours, she did more than compensate for his lukewarmness in the matter. Morning and evening she sallied forth to the Cathedral, the prayer-book under her arm marked with a conspicuous cross; nor was she content to join in the service, but improved upon it, folks said, by variations of her own; not merely turning towards the east when the creed was being recited, a thing hitherto unheard of in Barchester, but expressing, by sundry little bows and crossings, the spirit that was in her. It was said that she read the *Guardian* newspaper from cover to cover; and when a certain prebendary in the west of England got into trouble through his ritualistic practices, she was believed to have made a contribution towards the legal expenses in which he was involved. There were some who maintained, even, that Miss Oriel indulged in the luxury of auricular confession, and asked how else you were to explain her frequent visits to London, and to that very notorious clergyman, Mr. Cutaway Stole.

It must not be understood, however, that Miss Oriel belonged to that class of ecstatic females whose devotion begins and ends with the care of their own souls. On the contrary, she was well known to be one of the most charitable people in the city. There was, in particular, a little parish at one end of the town, dedicated to St. Peter ad vincula, which contained many poor houses and still poorer inhabitants; and to these inhabitants Augusta played the part of Providence. I will not say that she did not

enjoy the services at St. Peter's, which were of a dangerously modern type; for there were two candles above the communion-table which were lit at the time of worship, and sundry pieces of embroidery which mysteriously changed their colour at different seasons of the year, and celebrations on feastdays; so that Bishop Deadletter, who then ruled the diocese in place of Bishop Proudie, shook his head portentously over their goings-on. But Augusta did not only like the services, she loved the poor; and many were the blankets and the jellies which she conveyed into the houses of the people, and many were the smiles that greeted her as she made her way through those dingy streets. The reader will by now, perhaps, have formed the image of her in his mind as that of a severe old lady in a poke-bonnet. Nothing could be further from the truth; she was quite young, and her fair face was better suited to the ball-room than to the soup-kitchen; she was, too, uncommonly sensible, in spite of all her taste for ecclesiastical millinery.

Augusta Oriel made a slow recovery; for what reason, I cannot lay down with certainty. Dr. Humme-Haw attributed it to the violent methods which his rival had used to reduce the fever; but there were others, still more malicious, who said that Dr. Bold was not at all averse from calling daily at the house, and taking the young lady's hand while he felt her pulse, and looking into the young lady's eyes when he made as if to examine her

complexion; nay, that he would have kept her bedridden for months, if he had not feared that his reputation as a doctor would be jeopardized thereby. Be that as it may, a slow recovery Augusta Oriel did make; and when she returned to her health, it was found that she had not altogether dismissed Dr. Bold from her society. For many of these poor people in the parish of St. Peter<sup>ad</sup>vincula were Dr. Bold's patients; and for the relief of their needs the energetic doctor and his fair patroness met in almost daily conclave; never had so many blankets, so many bowls of mutton broth, found their way into those lonely hovels, never (people said) had so much consultation been necessary before the exact quantity and quality of them could be decided upon.

When this had been going forward for some time, the minds of the Barchesterians were no longer in any doubt; the two were going to make a match of it. For you must know that in Barchester, as in most Cathedral cities, there are many residents who have retired from active life, and have a good deal of time on their hands; which time they chiefly devote to the contemplation of other people's business, with the most laudable intentions in the world. Mrs. Thumble reported that when they passed her window on the previous Saturday the pair of them had their heads very close together; and Miss Tattle was in a position to add, from information received, that Dr. Bold had now a running account at the florist's. An anonymous letter, and

one or two hints in private conversation, benevolently gave Mrs. Oriel to understand that she would do well to look to her daughter's conduct, unless she wanted to see her fly away into a nest of open unbelief. Poor Trichy! Those were sad nights she spent, wondering if a word in season could and should be spoken. But she had learnt her lesson, in those old days when Mary Thorne was interdicted all access to the hall at Greshamsbury, because the young squire had looked on her with favour. No good, she felt, could come of her interference; and in my judgment she was in the right of it.

All the same, the gossips of Barchester, though they often exaggerate, are seldom wide of the mark. It was quite true that Dr. Bold had looked rather longer into his patient's eyes than the practice of his art necessitated; it was quite true that he gave more thought to those sufferers who were fortunate enough to live in the parish of St. Peter's *ad vincula* than to all the rest. And, although he was not given to introspection, as people of the cocksure type seldom are, he did after a time begin to ask himself why he was seeing so much of Miss Oriel, and why he experienced a curious feeling of loneliness and *ennui* on the rare days when he had not been in her company. For it is usual, I believe, with young gentlemen to fall in love first and discover that they have done so afterwards. No sooner had our doctor succeeded in diagnosing his own symptoms, than he decided to exhibit, as a remedy for those pains from which he now found himself to be suffering, a pro-

posal of marriage. Our doctor had a good opinion of himself, and well he might; he was tall, straight, and good-looking; he knew himself to be clever above the average, and although his prospects were less rosy than they had been, the decline in his fortunes seemed now to have been definitely arrested. The fact that the young lady, so far from shewing any distaste for his company, demanded it almost as eagerly as he hers, gave some promise of reciprocated affection. The fact that she was, in religion, a devotee, was a fact which gave him pause, but did not deter him. Why should she not worship like her mother before her? It is our belief that no man ever yet found credulity an undesirable quality in his destined bride. It is always a graceful, and may in certain circumstances prove a useful accomplishment.

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Next day, therefore, finding himself alone with his *inamorata* in Mrs. Oriel's drawing-room (after they had discussed the question of further sustentation for the infant Podgenses, on the supposed ground that the infant Podgenses were shortly to become even more numerous than before), Johnny Bold got up, leant his elbow against the mantelshelf as if to indicate that the conversation was now to take a fresh turn, and thus made his suit:

"Miss Oriel, circumstances have of late thrown us so much together that I should be a vain man if I thought that our frequent interviews argued, in you, any preference for my society. I am well



aware that our association hitherto has been of a professional character; and it may well be that you have no desire to make it closer or more personal. My own feelings, however, are very different; it has been impossible for me to watch you going about your merciful errands in this town without conceiving for you a sentiment of admiration which has, in time, grown into something warmer than mere admiration. In short, Miss Oriel, I have come to wonder whether you might not be prevailed upon to enter into a life-long partnership with me which would be, at the same time, a life-long companionship in good works. That such a declaration will surprise you, I have little doubt; for I know you to be as modest as you are accomplished, and as retiring as you are beautiful. That it will be immediately acceptable to you, is more than I dare to hope; but I would entreat you to give the matter earnest consideration, before you refuse the homage of one whose sincerest wish is to be, all his life, your very humble admirer. Miss Oriel, may I do myself the honour of asking your excellent father for your hand in marriage?"

It is to be believed that young ladies, in spite of the surprise just alluded to, do sometimes have a kind of presentiment that young gentlemen are about to fall at their feet; and even, that they overcome their maidenly feelings sufficiently to rehearse, in the privacy of their own bedrooms, the answer which they would make if such a contingency arose. I will not vouch for it, therefore, that Miss Oriel's

answer was a wholly extempore affair; still, the gentleman had the advantage in being able to propose at a time of his own choosing, and her answer was therefore less carefully phrased than his. "Dr. Bold," she said, "I cannot deny that, for some weeks past, I have taken much interest in you; gratitude alone would demand it, since I owe my life to your skill. But there is one question that I must ask before I say anything further; it is one to which I would prefer to have the answer from your own lips. Is it true that you are, as men say . . . " (she paused, and coloured a little) ". . . an atheist? "

"Miss Oriel," replied the doctor, "you have been frank with me, and it is only right that I should be frank with you. It does indeed seem to me that it is my duty, as a man of science, to hold as certainly true only that which can be demonstrated, and has been demonstrated, by scientific proof. Since the existence of a Deity cannot be established by any verifiable test, I cannot make that doctrine my own; although I would prefer to call myself, like some other new thinkers, not so much an atheist as an *agnostic*—that is, one who rejects all statements about another world, not necessarily as untrue, but as unproven. You must not think, however, that I value any the less for that the beautiful devotion which you shew in the pursuit of your own convictions. Nor, if you will consent to make a happy man of me, will I ever by word or action attempt to interfere with your

beliefs—that I swear, on my honour as a gentleman. More than that I cannot say; and I believe you would be the last to suggest that I should palter with my sincere convictions in the hope of winning even such a prize as yourself.”

Alas, Dr. Bold, why did no friendly voice in thy bosom warn thee that this is not the way young ladies are to be wooed? A very little unbending on thy part; a mere accent of wistful regret, as if thou wouldst fain share those beliefs with thy Augusta couldst thou but be brought to see the light, and she is thine for the asking! For what woman ever resisted the temptation to set about reforming the man she loved? And Augusta Oriel did love Dr. Bold; only waited for one word of regret over a lost faith to throw herself into his arms. Alas, alas, Dr. Bold, that long and patient labours in thy surgery have never taught thee the very rudiments of a woman’s heart!

“Dr. Bold,” replied Augusta, “I must be plain with you. You have done me a very great honour; and, did nothing stand in the way, I believe I could love you as truly as woman ever loved her husband. But marriage, to my thinking, is the joining of two souls, not for a few brief years, but for all eternity. I could not give my hand to one who, looking forward to nothing better than extinction at death, would have no thought of our meeting again in a better life beyond. Pray leave me, Dr. Bold, and do not tempt my constancy further. I shall ever defend the honesty with which you hold your principles,

though, as you see, they are abominable to me. I can reciprocate no affection, believe me, except what is ratified by the dictates of religion."

What further passed between them, it is no business of ours to enquire. Suffice it to say that Augusta remained true to her decision, and that Johnny Bold crept away defeated, a crest-fallen man.

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It is the fashion with some of our novelists to send off their characters into a decline, when they meet with any considerable disappointment. Edwin, just refused by Angelina, or Angelina just jilted by Edwin, goes to bed and hangs for weeks between life and death, till the compassionate tears of the reader have run dry. Johnny Bold did not go into a decline; he succumbed to an attack of the fever, which already had its hold on him; nor did he lie between life and death, for his constitution was a strong one and the attack, fortunately, not very severe. All the same, I do not envy Johnny his three weeks in bed. For during that time Dr. Humme-Haw not only attended to all Johnny's patients, but also to Johnny himself; and, although I am assured that doctors never send in bills to one another, on the principle that dog does not bite dog, I have very little doubt that Dr. Humme-Haw got his money's worth, by expatiating to Johnny on the wide prevalence of the disease, and the success of his own methods in curing it. Johnny got well, whether owing to his rival's skill, or because he could no longer bear to lie in

bed and listen to his rival's self-congratulation. His aunt, Mary Bold, looked after him all through his illness; and she it was—for she was now better provided for than Eleanor—who sent him abroad to the South of France, that he might spend a fortnight or so in convalescence.

It is not my intention to follow Johnny all through his wanderings, or to describe the discomforts which he endured on French railway-platforms and in French railway-trains. It is enough to say that by the time he reached Cannes he was unconscious of having ever been ill, and almost unconscious of having been rejected by the fair Augusta, so completely did the thought of more recent sufferings fill his mind. The weather was sunny, but not altogether clement; and for the most part he kept indoors, or sauntered about the spacious gardens of his hotel, in which the spreading branches of half-tropical trees provided a delightful retreat from the sun's glare. It was on the second day after his arrival that, coming down the stairs, he was crushed into a corner to make way for a litter which was being borne up them by four liveried servants. At the occupant of the litter he gave but a single glance; yet that glance was enough to tell him that the lady who was being carried on it had one of the loveliest faces he had ever seen, rendered only the more lovely by the look of fixed melancholy which seemed to rest on it. You may be sure that it was not long before Johnny asked her name; sure, too, that he did so with the most *déagé* air possible, as

if the strange lady were of no real interest, and his question were one of mere civility. When his informant answered, "That? Oh, that's the Signora Vesey Neroni; quite a character here," it meant nothing to Johnny at all.

To Johnny it meant nothing; but to the reader, if he be suitably conversant with those older chronicles of Barsetshire, it will mean a great deal. He will remember that Madeline Stanhope was the daughter of a Barchester prebendary, since dead, who was more remarkable for inability to discharge his monthly accounts than for devotion to his sacred duties—which duties, indeed, he performed as seldom as possible, spending the rest of his year on the Lake of Como, for his health. He will remember how Madeline, when still very young, married a worthless Italian who ill-treated her; how she left him, and came back to her father's house, a cripple but still beautiful. He will remember what havoc the signora made in Barchester, chaining to her couch all the eligible bachelors of the city—even Mr. Slope, the Bishop's chaplain, even, for a time, Mr. Arabin, the future Dean. He will remember the wrath of Mrs. Proudie, and the doubt she expressed as to whether the creature had any feet. All this the reader will remember, but Johnny knew nothing of it at all; for he was but an infant when the signora came to Barchester, and neither his mother nor his stepfather were accustomed to talk much of the part which that episode played in their lives.

Another thing the reader will infer, which Johnny Bold, for all his diagnostic skill, was unable to infer; and that was, that the signora was by now well over fifty. The signora, if the truth must be told, took particularly good care that no such inferences should be drawn; if there ever was a creature that managed to preserve her loveliness, it was she. Since her father's death she was relatively well off; Charlotte had married, and Bertie had grown famous; what had become of her daughter Julia, no one knew, but it was conjectured that the mother kept her at a distance, for fear of challenging comparison. Though she would sometimes say, with a look of ineffable melancholy, that she had nobody now to look after her, there was a general opinion that she was perfectly capable of looking after herself. Her health had greatly improved, and it was doubtful whether she did not live the life of a cripple merely from habit. Certainly it was convenient to her to have gentlemen continually waiting on her couch; and certainly there was no lack of gentlemen to do so, at Cannes any more than at Barchester.

Johnny had several views of her from a distance, and each time he saw her he was more impressed by her beauty. Though now nearing thirty, he was but a hobbledehoy still in affairs of the heart; something, too, must be allowed for the recoil which an ardent lover feels when his suit has been rejected by a good woman. It is certain that Johnny was eager for an opportunity to make the signora's acquaintance; and this soon came to him by chance,

when he was called in as a doctor to prescribe for one of her servants, who had had a seizure. It was with a beating heart and something of a sheepish look that he called on the signora next morning to receive her thanks.

"Bold?" she said interrogatively, with that slight foreign accent which she now affected. "Dr. Bold? Tell me, you never had relations who lived at Barchester?"

"My father lived and died there; and my mother afterwards married Dr. Arabin, who became Dean. Were you ever there, then?"

For a moment, it looked as if the signora were going to say she had been. Then, with a slight frown, she did better: "No, I was never there, but my father, you know, held a prebend there." It would not do, she reflected, for this young man to be writing home and asking questions about her. Then she added, with a little sigh, "I have always been homeless, you see; and am now helpless besides, and depend on the charity of people who will come to visit a lonely creature like myself."

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Johnny soon found that this kind of charity was very prevalent among the male population of Cannes, a good deal too much so for his liking. Being himself without friends, he became a daily visitor to the signora's saloon; here he usually met a crowd of gentlemen in attendance, with most of whom—for he was a poor hand at French—he



found it difficult to exchange civilities. Again and again, as the days went by, he told himself that he must break away from the wiles of this enchantress—for he was cleverer now, through practice, in diagnosing his own love-symptoms; but the spell was too great for him, and the signora had taken care to develop an imaginary ailment, over which she hastened to consult him professionally if she found him remiss in paying his devoirs. To do him justice, it must be explained that he had either been so misinformed, or so misunderstood an informant, as to suppose that Captain Neroni was no longer alive, whereas in truth, having laid by his papal trappings in a drawer, that officer was enjoying an excellent post under the Italian government. For all that, Johnny knew well enough that he was making a fool of himself. He knew that this woman was worthless, as surely as he had known that Augusta was worthy of love. He knew that he would have been spending his time more profitably if he had spent it at the gaming-tables. But, as I say, the spell was too strong for him; when he met the signora alone, their intimacy ever increased; when she was with others, he found himself burning with jealousy.

"Dr. Bold," the signora said to him one day, when they were alone together in her saloon, "you will think me very impertinent; but I must confess that I have an outrageous curiosity about other people's affairs. In particular, I always flatter myself that I know an unhappy man when I see him. And

from the moment I first set eyes on you in this hotel, I felt certain you were a man who had experienced no ordinary sadness in life. Come, I will ask for no details; I only want to know whether I was right in my guess? We who have suffered, believe me, are continually eager to heal the wounds of others."

"Signora," replied the doctor, "no question you might ask me could possibly be impertinent. If you think so, it must be that you do not understand how sensible I am of your great kindness to me, and what it has meant to me to be able to exchange my ideas with an English lady on these foreign shores. No, your instinct has not deceived you; and if it will not weary you to hear of my troubles, you shall have the full story of them."

And with that he gave her the history of his ill-starred love for Miss Oriel. And, as he told it, he knew that it all belonged to the past; that the image of his old love had faded from his bosom, to be replaced by that of the beautiful creature who now reclined in front of him. She heard him out in silence; then she said, with great energy, "Dr. Bold, she was not worthy of you."

"Not worthy of me!" repeated the young man, as if stupefied.

"I say she was not worthy of you; and I say that no woman is worthy of an honest man's love, who will let her religious scruples come between him and her. A great love will never submit to being made the plaything of priests and creeds.

But you, too, Dr. Bold, what were you doing, that you should have stood there philosophizing to her, and giving her lectures in biology, instead of taking her into your arms? You may value Truth, Dr. Bold; but you will find one day that it does not weigh in the scales with love. When you have found a woman who is really worthy of your affection——”

“I *have* found her!” exclaimed Johnny, his own voice sounding strange in his ears. And then and there, with no thought of Miss Oriel, or of Barchester, or of his parents, he knelt at the foot of the signora’s couch and made passionate declaration of love for her. We have had enough of love-scenes for one chapter; so I will not repeat his protestations at full length. It is enough to say that they did not differ materially from those of our friend Mr. Slope on a similar occasion—or indeed from those of any love-lorn gentleman who has been led on, by an unscrupulous woman, to make a goose of himself.

The signora was now on familiar ground, and she fell back upon her customary tone of raillery. “These are brave words, Dr. Bold,” she said; “may I ask if you would use them if my husband were here?”

Poor Johnny scrambled to his feet in no very dignified manner, blushing scarlet. “Your husband!” he repeated. “Signora, if I have appeared to insult you, nothing could have been further from my intentions. On my honour, I had been told that you were . . . that Signor Neroni was . . .”

"Dead? He is, thank you, in excellent health. But let me tell you that I have succeeded, after many years, in obtaining a divorce from him. There, will that suffice you? Or are you not atheist enough to defy the conventions? Tell me, pray, whether your offer still holds good; I am loath to believe that you were trifling with me."

Our doctor strode up and down the room, in great discomposure. Not that he was in any hesitation of mind; his difficulty, rather, was to phrase his sentiments in such a way as should not contrast too brutally with the impassioned utterance which he had made so recently.

"Signora," he said at last, "I must ask you to forgive me if I have, unintentionally, given you a false idea of my principles. You, who have lived so long on the continent of Europe, find it easy to associate freedom of thought with looseness of morals. It is our boast in England that we—some of us, that is—have shaken off the fetters of religious dogma without ceasing to reverence moral ideals. Nay, let me rather say that, like the early Christians in their time, we are even more scrupulous in our conduct than our neighbours, lest the cause for which we fight should be ill spoken of. What you call conventions are, to us, principles of decency which no consideration would induce us to outrage. Could I take you back to Barchester as my wife, to find that you would be cold-shouldered by every decent and pure woman in the city? Could I go through a form of a marriage ceremony which

would commit you, as well as me, to a notion of its sanctity which you repudiate? No, Signora, it is best that we should part; and you will do me the justice, I hope, to believe that the professions I have made were made honestly, when I supposed that you were free to receive them."

What answer the signora would have made to this allocution, it is impossible to say. Just then an urgent summons came to Dr. Bold, asking his immediate attention on behalf of an English resident, who had been unfortunate enough to meet with a carriage accident. He swore, ever afterwards, that as the door closed behind him he heard peals of laughter coming from the lady's sofa; but in this he may have been mistaken. It had been his intention, in any case, to leave for England the next morning; and he found it impossible to secure a private audience with the signora before doing so; he had to be content, therefore, with a formal farewell; nor do I feel certain that he regretted his lack of opportunity.

And here we must leave him; not excusing his faults, and reserving a kindly eye even for his virtues. How his practice prospered; how, much later in life, he contracted a very suitable and prudent marriage; how, too, as the years went on, he became a little more accommodating in his opinions, and was heard to admit that our knowledge of nature's secrets was, after all, still in its infancy, it is no business of the present chronicler's to record. As for Miss Oriel, I am sorry to say that

she was carried away, not long afterwards, by an access of religious enthusiasm, and took the veil in a convent of religious, where her pretty face was disfigured ever afterwards with the neighbourhood of an ugly pokebonnet, to the great regret of all who knew her in Barchester.

## II

### THE GRACES OF MARMADUKE THORNE

IT is Mr. Bunce's opinion that the degeneracy of the present age, about which quality you may be sure that he holds vigorous opinions, dates from the 'nineties. It was then that, in his own phrase—cryptic, but repeated more than once with sage waggings of the head—"folks began to go frivolous like." The truth of the matter is, I suspect, that Mr. Bunce began to go forty like; after which age it is very observable (to all those who have reached it) that something has gone wrong with everybody except themselves. In particular, they notice that the young people nowadays don't seem to have any respect for their elders; that they are inexplicably selfish; and that they have begun to go frivolous like. Is it possible, reader, that the pulses of our own lives have begun to beat slower? And that we only complain of their frivolity because we are growing serious, as we complain of their mumbling when we are growing a trifle deaf?

As I say, I cannot be sure that Mr. Bunce is justified in his view about the 'nineties. And even if he is justified in that, I cannot be sure that he is right in regarding the career of Marmaduke Thorne as

typical of the period. For Marmaduke Thorne was, both in his temperament and in his circumstances, unlike other young men; and it may be that his history would have been the same, whatever age he had been born in. Of that I must leave the reader to judge; meanwhile, let me have liberty to tell the story in my own way; not as Mr. Bunce tells it, with a great deal of moralizing to season it.

. . . . .

Dr. Thomas Thorne and Miss Martha Dunstable, when they were joined together in matrimony, were pronounced by the county at large to be the most fortunate couple among its inhabitants; and I think the county was in the right of it. For had they not, in the first place, all the profits derived from the Oil of Lebanon at their disposal? And although much has been written about love in a cottage, and the superiority of honest hearts to gilded splendour, I for one will never believe that such love is any the worse if you throw in half-a-dozen reception-rooms; or that such honest hearts as Dr. Thorne and Miss Dunstable undoubtedly possessed could have become any honester, if the profits derived from the Oil of Lebanon had been invested in some concern that went bankrupt. It is quite certain, at least, that Dr. Thorne never had his head turned or his habits altered by the sudden wealth which came to him. He ceased to practise, indeed, as a doctor; but he busied himself so much with the affairs of the county and of the parish that he never missed his



old rounds; and when he came in from Barchester after a tiring day his wife Martha would let him drink as powerful a brew of tea as ever his niece Mary brewed for him, in those earlier days at Greshamsbury. It will readily be guessed that both man and wife were forward in charity to the poor; so that within five miles of Chaldicotes there was no villager (so rumour said) who did not live like a well-to-do farmer.

And then, there was the house at Chaldicotes. The Chace, indeed, had been disforested, to the regret of my author; but it is doubtful whether the Thornes had the same reason for regret. Their own park, which had once been part of the Chace, now acquired a rarity value of its own from the neighbourhood of wheat and turnips; they were able to say, or to hear others say, that there were no oaks like theirs for miles round. And that Charles II house, with its two entrances by double flights of stairs—that was worth having. It is true Martha Thorne was for pulling it all down, and building a new house, in the style of the day, as a birthday present for her husband. This was when Mr. Cheesemeadow came over to Barchester to do the repairs on the west front; and there is no doubt Mr. Cheesemeadow would have enjoyed himself enormously, erecting a Venetian palace with Gothic windows and patterns in coloured brick, to replace the old mansion of the Sowerbys. But Mary Gresham, I am glad to say, dissuaded her, and the Oil of Lebanon was diverted into other channels.

Moreover, before they had been long married, their cousins Wilfrid and Monica died at much the same time, leaving to them (as the only surviving members of the family) the more antique glories of Ullathorne. They could not live in two houses at once, but Ullathorne, you may be sure, was kept in good repair, and it was destined to be Mrs. Thorne's dower-house, if she should outlive her husband and her elder son, Francis, should bring a wife home to Chaldicotes.

Over the nursery arrangements of the Thornes, history repeated itself, as it so often does in families. They had but two children, both sons, like Mr. Prebendary Thorne before them; and those two sons were born ten years apart, just as Wilfrid Thorne was ten years younger than his sister Monica. It is unnecessary to add that the elder of them was christened Francis, and that his godfather was his cousin by marriage, young Mr. Gresham, of Greshamsbury and Boxall Hill. Great were the rejoicings when he made his appearance on the scene; but for that event, it appeared likely that the male line of the Thornes, like that of the Scatcherds before them, might become extinct. "And for that matter, my dear," Mrs. Thorne said to her old friend, Mrs. Harold Smith, "I believe Emily is the last of the Dunstables. But then, you know, the Thornes always thought a great deal about blood, when we were only thinking about oil. For myself, I never did believe in blood, and if I hadn't had a child I'd have adopted one quite cheerfully."

"I believe you really are heartless," said Mrs. Harold Smith, dandling the last of the Thornes in a wistful manner, as if reminded that her own marriage might have been happier if there had been olive-branches round the Cabinet Minister's table.

"Not at all, my dear; only vulgar. But then, you see, I have been so much courted by great people, from the de Courcys downwards, that I have begun to think blood is the better for a little oiling." From which it will be made plain to the reader that marriage had in no wise altered Mrs. Thorne's disposition to quiz her friends, or even her husband when occasion demanded it.

Assuredly there was no lack of fairy godmothers at Francis Thorne's christening. Miss Monica Thorne came over, bringing with her a coral on which, so she said, a Thorne cut his teeth in the days of Queen Elizabeth. Mary Gresham came over, and wished him honesty and loyalty like his father's. Came Lucy Lufton, and wished him unwavering devotion to the woman of his choice. Came Eleanor Arabin, and wished him fearless independence of the world's judgments. Came Grace Grantley, and wished him indifference to wealth. And here, perhaps, she rather overdid it. For whereas we all set store by such indifference, when we meet it in those who are not much blessed with the things of this world, we have a different name for it when we come across it in those who are already rich. And, if the truth must be told, young

Francis had quite as much indifference to wealth as was good for him, considering the station in which he was born; and perhaps the Lady Amelia Gazebee could have done better for him—only the Lady Amelia was not present at the christening, as she was expecting an addition to her own family not long afterwards.

. . . . .

Francis Thorne took after his father, as we believe is not uncommon in the case of elder sons. That is to say, he took after his father's side of the family; and if he inherited from the doctor something of that pride of race, something, too, of that open and frank disposition which distinguished him, he would seem to have inherited at the same time a certain wildness in the blood, which was more observable in his uncle Henry, dead long since. In Henry Thorne, that wildness had begotten a fondness for low company, and a fatal self-indulgence which led to his death. In Francis, from his boyhood, there was a strain of recklessness which brought him, at first, nothing but praise; he rode to hounds more daringly than any boy of his age in Bassetshire. But later it came to be observed that, when he stayed at his mother's house in London and forgathered with his old school friends, he did so mostly at the gaming-tables; and even when he was in the country he would be off to race-meetings with a regularity of which his parents and his elders found reason to disapprove.

It will be evident to any reader of those older chronicles that society in Barssetshire was divided into two sets, which met only occasionally and had little in common. Among the Whigs, who took their cue from Gatherum Castle and from Courcy, there was an affectation of worldliness which the influence of that good man Bishop Proudie, for all his Whig sympathies, did little to dispel. A Whig like Nathaniel Sowerby was a staunch patron of the turf; and he was one who infected by his example the younger men of the opposite camp—Lord Lufton, as we know, got into a fast set without his mother's knowledge, and even Mark Robarts, clergyman as he was, was carried away for a time into the same dissimulation. But for the most part the Tory families, Luftons and Thornes and Greshams, rode to hounds and minded their estates and did not find they had leisure to waste over the frivolities of their neighbours. About the time, however, when young Frank Thorne was growing up, there was a change in the usages of fashionable society. Important Persons had begun or were beginning to take their pleasures more openly, and patronized the diversions both of the turf and of the stage. Now, although reverence forbids us to print the first half of the quotation, there is no doubt that *plectuntur Achivi*; by which I mean to say, that the follies of those who are very highly placed will, before long, become the follies of the fashionable world in general. So that Frank Thorne, like other young men of his age, found himself

taking his pleasures cheek by jowl with the Honourable Georges and the Honourable Johns from Courcy Castle; and his elders, as I say, were not slow to disapprove of it.

It is well for such a young man if he has a long minority, and must wait for control of the purse-strings until age has cooled him. In those days, despite the best efforts of Sir Lambda Mewnew and Sir Omicron Pie, heads of families did not keep their heirs waiting so long to step into their shoes. It must be remembered, besides, that young Frank was the child of a late marriage; his father was fifty when he made his proposal, and although we should never enquire too closely into a lady's age, it is probable that Miss Dunstable was, at the time, nearer forty than thirty. As a matter of fact, the father died as an old man when the son had not yet come of age, nor did the mother long survive him. It will be remembered that she was accompanied on her travels, as Miss Dunstable, by a Doctor Easyman, her favourite physician, and had to spend a good deal of her time looking after his health. It was appropriate therefore that she should catch, at his funeral, a chill from which she never recovered. She died, leaving her elder son still in his twenties, in great need of direction from his elders, and without an uncle or an aunt to remonstrate with him.

. . . . .

She left also a younger son, with whom we are here more intimately concerned. By what freak of

fancy they christened him Marmaduke, I cannot say; Mr. Bunce is unable to remember anyone else who has borne that name in Barsetshire. Probably it was from some novel, fashionable at the time, that the unlovely appellation was derived. Marmaduke was his mother's child; had the same large mouth, curling dark hair, and bright, small black eyes. His nature also took after her, being far more feminine than his brother's—though indeed Martha Dunstable herself was never over-feminine. He had the same quickness of wit; and he either inherited or learned from her that habit of irreverence which was so noticeable in her speech. The mother was a quiz; she quizzed her son, instead of rebuking him, when he was ill behaved; she quizzed others, his elders, in his presence. And it is our belief that this is not the best way to bring up a child. A young child has little power of discernment between what is spoken in earnest and what is spoken in jest, so that it will easily learn to despise everything and everybody, when it is accustomed to hearing them spoken of in a slighting manner.

Of this, I could produce numerous examples; for at the time when little Marmaduke was first breeched my friend Mr. Bunce had an understanding—which, alas, came to nothing—with the Chaldicotes nursery-maid. Thus, one day when he was playing on the floor with his Noah's Ark, "Mamma," he said suddenly (deceived, as many of us have been at his age, by a sartorial illusion), "were Noah and his sons clergymen?"

There were, just then, regrettable differences of opinion in the church over matters of ceremonial, which Mrs. Thorne professed to find disedifying. But I cannot convince myself she had any right to reply, "No, darling; they would have wanted four arks if they had been." There is no doubt but Mrs. Thorne was a kind-hearted and charitable woman; yet, for my own part, I think she did ill to answer his childish questions so lightly, and Mr. Bunce is in agreement with me.

The habit of cynicism thus begotten in our hero was all the more regrettable, since he was early destined for holy orders. Such an arrangement may at first seem surprising. Were not the Thornes (it will be asked) rulers both of Chaldicotes and of Ullathorne; and would it not have been seemly that either should pass to a different branch of the family, Francis taking the former, if he preferred it, and Marmaduke the latter? But you must know that, not long before, the Giants had been in office, and these, being jealous (as the Earth-born should be) for the proper distribution of land, did then and there impose a most discouraging tax, to be paid whenever a great property should pass from father to son, or from squire to heir; which tax has operated most effectively in Barsetshire, so that the great properties have for the most part passed into the hands of people that do not know who their heirs are, and, if they knew, would not travel a mile to see them hanged. Ullathorne was close to the city itself, and even then in some danger of being



swallowed up in the suburbs. And it seemed likely that when our friend Dr. Thorne died his heir would have to sell Ullathorne, that he might be allowed to enjoy the amenities of Chaldicotes in peace.

Marmaduke, then, was destined for the Church; nor was there any danger of his starving in that profession. You will remember that there is a church inside the park gates at Chaldicotes; in which church the Rev. Mark Robarts made his appeal for the missionary needs of Papua and New Guinea, the day after Mr. Harold Smith's famous lecture. It is a very small church, and it has a congregation of sixty or seventy, most of whom are gardeners, gamekeepers, or labourers on the estate. But, by some accident of ecclesiastical administration which I shall not attempt to account for, the modest services of the parish clergyman are remunerated at the figure of nine hundred pounds a year. Moreover, the presentation to the living is in the squire's gift; so that from time immemorial it had been customary for the rector of Chaldicotes to be some younger son, poor relation, or dependent of the family. Poor Nat Sowerby, who was not much of a churchgoer, set little store by this right of presentation, and he easily let it pass out of his hands with the rest of the estate when Miss Dunstable, as she then was, bought it from him. Unless, therefore, young Marmaduke should become deaf and dumb, or particularly scandalous in his manner of living, it seemed that this would be an excellent

way of providing for him. He was, as a matter of fact, a thoughtful lad, and fond of his books; moreover he was a bad shot and had a bad seat on a horse, two characteristics which were generally regarded as signs of a clerical vocation among old-fashioned people in Bassetshire.

Since he was destined for the Church, it followed that he must be sent to Oxford. His brother Francis had been at Cambridge, matriculating at his godfather's old college; and had come away without much alteration to show for it, except that he had shaved off the whiskers which adorned him in his freshman's year. But it was still the right thing in the Barchester diocese for the clergy to receive their education at the older University, despite the coming of Dr. Proudie and his Whigs. Oxford may indeed be, as Mr. Asinine Jawbone declares it to be, the home of lost causes, but it is an uncommonly good hotel for winning ones; and whereas the somewhat crusted orthodoxy in which the Grantleys and the Arabins had been brought up was now disappearing, the new Broad Church fashion (according to which the Christian faith was to be reconciled with modern German philosophy, to the slight detriment of the Thirty-nine Articles) was nowhere more popular. To Oxford, then, men still went who desired to become clergymen, well assured that it would turn them into everything a clergyman ought to be; and Marmaduke Thorne went with the rest of them. Bishop Deadletter himself, then at the very end of his life, gave him an interview beforehand, in which

he warned him to beware of ritualism and of low company.

As far as I could ever make out, this warning of the good bishop's was well heeded, or perhaps unnecessary. So careful was young Mr. Thorne to avoid any threats against his faith from designing ritualists, that by way of being on the safe side he eschewed the society of all religious persons whatsoever. Yet he did not, for that reason, betake himself to low company, as that phrase is ordinarily understood; he did not play billiards at the Mitre, or mingle in the festivities of St. Giles' Fair. On the other hand, I am sorry to say that he did not associate himself with that tradition of plain living and high thinking which was to be found at the time among the best spirits of the University, and which produced so many earnest divines. He attached himself instead to the remnants of a small clique which patronised the arts, adopted eccentricities of dress, and made its chief business in life the exchange of "smart" conversation. It was a set that belonged to the past; its great days had gone by, a dozen years before; but it was kept alive by *revenants* from that earlier period, who had the powers of fascination which thirty will always have over eighteen. Thus it was that Marmaduke Thorne learned to talk very slowly indeed, with a very clear pronunciation of consonants; and to talk languidly, as if it were really rather a nuisance to have to say anything at all, and a great casting of pearls before

swine to make such clever remarks before his present company. When he spent his vacations at Chaldicotes, he was something which the streets of Barchester had never seen, and which the drawing-rooms of Barchester had never learned to appreciate.

It was when he had just taken his final examinations, but had not yet proceeded to his degree, that he found himself talking over his future prospects with his brother at the dinner-table. The decorated plaster designs on the walls of the great dining-room were lit up brilliantly with the dying sunshine of June, very much as they must have been on that evening, more than thirty years earlier, when Nathaniel Sowerby sat there all alone, contemplating his approaching ruin. Mr. Francis Thorne, had the truth been known, was as near to ruin as Mr. Sowerby himself; he had borrowed money, he had mortgaged property, but very few even among his friends knew how he was situated. And he sat there not alone, but with this little-understood brother of his, who (though he had a small allowance left him by will) had no expectations, save from the almost bankrupt estate. The two brothers had never been intimate, and three years at Oxford had changed the younger of them into a complete stranger. He despised all those country sports and country interests in which and for which the elder lived. Nevertheless, Francis Thorne did his best to make him welcome. We are always eager to soften by little attentions those whom we have injured.

"Give yourself some more port, old fellow," he said. "I suppose, now you're finished with the 'Varsity, you'll be making up your mind about going into the Church. It's lucky for you, if your mind's set that way, they've appointed Sam Grantley to be bishop." For Samuel Grantley's father, the great Archdeacon, had been a close friend of Dr. Thomas Thorne; and a close friend, too, of those cousins of his who had lived under the shadow of St. Ewold's.

"Meaning that that sort of thing runs in families?" suggested Marmaduke, wilfully misunderstanding him. "Well, I daresay we have got as much clerical blood in us as the Grantleys; only let us hope it doesn't go too far back, for the sake of the Thorne pedigree. To tell the truth, my dear Francis, I had not quite made up my mind between the Church and journalism. Either career attracts me; one means that you tell the truth and nobody believes you, the other that you tell lies and everybody believes you. What do you think; can you see me as an editor?"

"Journalism needs money," said the other, flushing.

"Well, let us say that journalists need money anyhow. And money, if I interpret you aright, is not forthcoming? The Thorne acres——"

"Land," said Francis, "is not what it was."

"It never has been. That complaint I take to be as old as Noah; who indeed had some justification for making it. What you mean, I am afraid, is that

those little horses of yours have not been running straight?"

"I have been hard hit every way. You have your allowance; that is safe. I don't know if I can do any more for you; not now, anyhow."

"So that, as you can't put your hand into your pocket for me, we must ask Mother Church to do it instead. Well, it is lucky you have the presentation to Chaldicotes. Don't, I beg of you, put that on the St. Leger. I suppose I must make the best of the clerical state. Fortunately nowadays it is not necessary to have any beliefs in order to be a clergyman. All you need is moral tastes, which I am glad to say I already possess, and a manner of reading the lessons which should not be difficult to acquire. Only, I will not wear those collars that go the wrong way round. I shall make a point of that to the bishop."

Francis Thorne, for all his spendthrift habits, was a devout churchman, and it wounded him to hear sacred things spoken of thus irreligiously. "I should have thought," he protested, "that you would need some love of the work."

"If there was any work to do, yes. But what work is there to do in a parish like Chaldicotes, where a man could shake his whole congregation by the hand in a quarter of an hour? For such a living, my dear Francis, what is rather needed is a love of leisure. And with that qualification I am abundantly blessed. Not that I wish to be idle; I should probably revert to the eighteenth

century type, and spend my life composing a Latin epic. Meanwhile, I must compose my letter to the bishop."

"I wish you would make up your mind whether you are speaking in joke or in earnest."

"I wish you wouldn't divide up life into compartments like that. All the best people are against it. As a matter of fact, I am being perfectly serious. I haven't, perhaps, the clerical love of interfering in other people's lives. But I have the hierophantic instinct, if you know what that means. The mysteriousness of religion appeals to me; and I like to think of myself as a half-sacred figure, dignified, not magnified, by a holy office, parting for others the veil that lies between them and the unseen. I'm not sure I oughtn't to be a Catholic priest really."

"I hope you would do nothing to disgrace us, Marmaduke."

Poor Mr. Francis Thorne! He would dearly have loved to rebuke his prodigal brother; but how was he to do it when he knew he was such a prodigal brother himself? How was the pot to call the kettle black? Or rather—for his faults, great and grievous though they were, were not his brother's faults—how was the pot to call attention to the rust on the table-knives, without calling attention to its own blackness? Therefore he wandered away miserably enough, only hoping that Bishop Grantley was wise enough to protect his flock from unworthy pastors.

Marmaduke Thorne did write his letter to the bishop, and it must have been couched in suitable terms, for Bishop Grantley (who had, indeed, known him as a boy, and formed a good opinion of him) wrote back a courteous note, hoping that Mr. Thorne would make it convenient to himself to call at the palace the following Thursday, at half-past eleven o'clock. On the following Thursday, therefore, Mr. Marmaduke Thorne rose somewhat earlier than his custom was, and refused his brother's offer of the gig to take him into Barchester. He had brought a bicycle with him back from Oxford, and was determined to make trial of the Barsetshire roads with it. So his machine was brought out for him from the stable yard, and he set off down the oak avenue at a famous pace. I cannot say that the Barsetshire roads were of the best, though there is no doubt but they had improved since the party from Courcy Castle made their way, by the same route, to Miss Thorne's *fête champêtre* at Ullathorne. All the same, our hero had a very enjoyable spin, reaching Barchester in little over the hour.

Bishop Grantley has already been described by my author, though at a much younger age—indeed, when he was a schoolboy home for the holidays. "Perhaps Samuel was the general favourite; and dear little Soapy, as he was familiarly called, was as engaging a child as ever mother petted. He was soft and gentle in his manners, and attractive in his speech . . . he was courteous to all, he was affable to the lowly, and meek even to the very scullery;



maid. . . . To speak the truth, Samuel was a cunning boy, and those even who loved him best could not but own that for one so young he was too adroit in choosing his words and too skilled in modulating his voice." Much water had flowed, since then, under the bridge that carries the London Road; and Samuel Grantley was now a man between fifty and sixty, and a bishop to boot. That he was eloquent, that he was tactful, that he was an accomplished courtier, that he was skilful in putting people at their ease, goes without saying. But it goes without saying, also, that he was not universally trusted by those who had dealings with him, whether in the diocese or outside of it.

The Bishop's study at Barchester palace is the same room which served that purpose in the days of old Bishop Grantley; the same in which his son, the archdeacon, was shocked to find that Mrs. Proudie had installed a new sofa, "a horrid chintz affair, most unprelatical and almost irreligious," and that she had replaced the old reddish-brown curtains with a "gaudy buff-coloured trumpery moreen." The chintz and the moreen survived under Bishop Deadletter, who was never one for making changes, so long as it was possible to leave things as they were. But Bishop Grantley, I hardly need to say, had restored all things to seemliness, though in a more modern taste; all the furniture and fittings were coloured a dark yellowish-green, with a fine set of Arundel prints round the walls. He bade his visitor be seated in a deep arm-chair,

and sat down himself opposite, in an oak chair which may or may not have been comfortable, but certainly looked medieval.

His first questions were after the health of the squire at Chaldicotes; about the servants there, and the coachman, and the head gardener, with all of whom he had contrived to have speech when he was last there for a confirmation. And all the time his eyes were taking in and "sizing up" (as the vulgar phrase goes) this young visitor with his four-in-hand tie, his carefully parted hair and his monocle. From Chaldicotes he passed on to Oxford; how was the Head of this or that College doing? Was it true the Union Society was not so much frequented as formerly? Was the new Town Hall yet in building? A handsome edifice, to judge by the plans. And so by insensible degrees he came round to the subject of the interview, and said he feared fewer Oxford men were coming forward now to take orders, and that it was a pity. Education, said the bishop, was not everything, but it was a pity.

I trust I have not given my readers the impression that Marmaduke Thorne was altogether a fool. He was, to be sure, a very affected and artificial young man. But a fool he was not; and he knew that it would not do to talk to the bishop in quite the same strain in which he was accustomed to talk to his brother. When the bishop asked him about candidates for ordination, he replied that he thought the number of those who attended the Regius Professor's lectures in divinity was still pretty large.

Hereby he gained the opportunity of insinuating that he had attended at least some of those lectures himself; but he somewhat spoilt the effect of the declaration by adding that the attendance was very fair considering how little attraction the lectures in question offered to a man of culture. The bishop said, well, these were times of unsettlement; by which he meant that the speculations of modern science had perhaps dimmed the faith of the rising generation. Unfortunately Mr. Thorne misunderstood him, and said he believed there was not much wrong with the tithe.

This unexpected reference to the loaves and fishes deepened a doubt in the good bishop's mind as to the seriousness of the young man before him. He felt inclined to ask, what possessed him that he wanted to present himself for ordination. But, since such is not the language bishops are permitted to use, he put the question in a different form by asking to what aim Mr. Thorne intended chiefly to consecrate himself?

This style of talking was foreign to Mr. Thorne's vocabulary, but he did his best with it. "I don't think I was ever ambitious," he said. "In any profession, the prizes are for the very few; but then, in any profession, there is room for people who don't want the prizes and are content to do their best in a small way." Here, I may say, he re-established his advantage; partly because the sentiment he thus expressed was one the bishop himself had expressed at a school prizegiving, about a

fortnight earlier; and partly—dare I say it?—because the bishop, excellent man as he was, had not perhaps an entirely blameless conscience in this matter of seeking the rewards of his profession. I never heard yet that Bishop Grantley so much as whispered “*nolo episcopari*,” when it was intimated to him that her Majesty had need of his services on the Bench.

“A very praiseworthy answer, Mr. Thorne,” he said. “That, after all, isn’t what matters, is it? But then, we are told there are diversities of ministrations, aren’t we? Were you looking forward to exercising the pastoral office in the town, for example, or in the country?”

“Well, my Lord, there’s Chaldicotes, you know. . . . It seems too good an opening to be missed, doesn’t it?”

Possibly the bishop understood our hero as meaning that there was a great and effectual door opened to him at Chaldicotes; possibly he only affected to. What he said was, “Yes, but we cannot be incumbents all at once, can we? There is the apprenticeship, there is the rule of thumb to be learned first. Perhaps a curacy in the country would, in your case, be most suitable.”

Marmaduke Thorne had some idea that it was impossible for him to become rector of Chaldicotes until he had spent a year in the diaconate. Beyond that, he knew that he was quite safe; that the present rector of Chaldicotes, Mr. Dropready, had money of his own, and was only waiting for the patron’s

convenience to resign the living. He knew, too, that in that case it would be illegal for Dr. Grantley to refuse to institute a clergyman chosen by the patron, unless he could bring some grave charge against him. All this he did not point out; he simply said, "Naturally, I should expect to work for my reward. Like Agag," he added, under the impression that this was the name of Jacob's father-in-law.

The bishop pondered this reply for a little in silence. If the truth must be told, he was in a difficult position. He could see that the young man before him had little aptitude for the clerical state; on the other hand, he thought of Mr. Francis Thorne as one of the most important landowners in Barsetshire, and as Francis Thorne was unmarried, it might well happen that his brother would succeed him. It would not be wise, then, to get on the wrong side of this brother, who might be of use, later, in contributing to diocesan subscriptions. There was the architect's report, for example, recommending that the Cathedral should be underpinned. . . . "Mr. Thorne," he said at last, "we hear a great deal nowadays about the priesthood of the laity. If you persist in applying for ordination, I do not know that I can deny it you. But I only ask you to consider, on your own behalf, whether you may not, perhaps, be able to exercise a more fruitful influence as a layman—more especially if you come in one day, as I suppose is possible, for the Chaldicotes and Ullathorne properties."

Perhaps it was unworldliness on Marmaduke Thorne's part, or perhaps it was an exaggerated idea of his personal gifts, but the notion had never entered his head that Bishop Grantley could be shewing him any special courtesy because he happened to be heir presumptive to his brother's property. He lost no time, therefore, in clearing up the situation. "Oh, as to that," he said, "I'm not expecting many temptations in the way of worldly prosperity. Ullathorne is as good as sold already, to pay off the Chaldicotes mortgage, and Chaldicotes will go the same way if my brother has another bad season. No, the rectory is all the expectations I have from him; that's certain."

A certain embarrassment seemed to find its way into the bishop's manner during the rest of the interview; and, though it lasted some time longer, he finished it by saying that Mr. Thorne should hear from him in the course of a day or two by the general post. Nevertheless, he was extremely gracious, and would have it that Mr. Thorne must stop to luncheon, which he did. There he met Mrs. Grantley, a somewhat faded person, not at all worthy of sitting where once Mrs. Proudie had sat, and two insignificant daughters; also, a lady from the United States of America who was then visiting the town, and had been invited to partake of luncheon that day at the Palace. Her name, which she repeated loudly after being introduced, as if she wished the hearer to get himself accustomed to it, appeared to be Miss Van Skulpit. She came

from the States, she added, "but my grandparents were Barchester people, Mr. Thorne; and, you know, we Americans always turn up like bad pennies."

"That's right," said Marmaduke; "you see, Miss Van Skulpit, I've been having a sermon from the bishop this last hour and more; so, of course, it's time for the collection." It is doubtful whether this pleasantry was very acceptable to the episcopal household, but Miss Van Skulpit was hugely delighted, demanding (presumably) of the celestial Powers whether Mr. Thorne was not just too killing. And so it went on, all through the meal; Marmaduke and Miss Van Skulpit rattled away together, while the bishop sat by devoting (for some reason) a kind of fatherly attention to the lady, but visibly more annoyed at the gentleman's rather flashy conversation. Before they parted, Marmaduke had vowed that he must positively get his brother to ask Miss Van Skulpit over to Chaldicotes; you had not seen Barchester, he assured her, until you had seen Chaldicotes; and she announced, for her part, that she would count the days until Mr. Francis Thorne's invitation arrived.

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And now my reader will be anxious to know more about Miss Van Skulpit, and the reasons for her appearance in Barchester. It often happens, when we have met a stranger for the first time, that we seem to meet nobody else, to hear no other subject discussed, for the next fortnight. So it was with

Mr. Marmaduke Thorne; everybody he spoke to, except himself, knew all about Miss Van Skulpit already. She was very pleasant to look upon—so much, indeed, he had discovered for himself; she was, further, extremely well off, her father having died after making a huge fortune—so it was said—in railroads. Who her father was, nobody was at pains to enquire; the son, it was thought, of decent middle-class people who had emigrated from England. And if Miss Van Skulpit liked to think they came from Barchester, so much the better; it meant that her pleasant face was to be seen about the streets, her pleasant dinner-parties to be partaken of at the Dragon of Wantly—which hostelry, although the glories of its coaching days were now faded, was still the most respected in Barchester.

So much Mr. Thorne heard; what he did not hear, because nobody knew of it, was the full story of Miss Van Skulpit's ancestry. That I have more intimate knowledge of the facts is due to my friendship with Mr. Bunce; for poor folk, at least in an old-fashioned place like Barchester, have much longer memories than their richer neighbours. Mr. Bunce's uncle, as we know, was formerly an inmate of Hiram's hospital; and one of his fellow-inmates was that same Job Skulpit who needed so much persuasion before he would put down his name to Abel Handy's petition. The Skulpit family had several branches in the town; and Job, who came from the poorest, knew the history of them all. It was a cousin of his, a hardware dealer, who made



Mary Scatcherd his wife and took her off to America, while her brother, Roger Scatcherd, was in prison for the manslaughter of Henry Thorne, her betrayer. The condition made, it will be remembered, was that the infant daughter, Mary Thorne, should be left behind, in ignorance of her parentage. Thus, although the Thornes knew nothing of the matter, Miss Van Skulpit's origins were closely connected with the history of their own family; and her father had been half-brother to Mary Thorne, now Mary Gresham of Greshamsbury, who was their cousin.

How the prefix of "Van" came to be added to the name, is a mystery which lies buried with the railroad magnate. It is to be supposed that he was anxious to see his wife and daughter well received by fashionable persons in New York. In any case, it did no harm to anybody; at the time when she came over to England, the young lady had no relations left in Barchester except among the very poorest, and these would have scrupled to claim any acquaintance with her, Van or no Van. She lived for several weeks together at the Dragon of Wantly, and enjoyed much hospitality among the ladies of the Cathedral close; who, if the truth must be told, were always a little anxious to outdo one another in entertaining fashionable visitors to the district. As Mrs. Green said to Mrs. Grey, "It doesn't do to get narrow."

An invitation to Chaldicotes was less easy to be obtained, at least by an unattached young lady; for Mr. Francis Thorne, like his cousin Wilfrid before

him, and like his own father during so many years, was a contented bachelor. In the end, however, he did give a dinner-party in honour of Miss Van Skulpit; and so successful was the introduction that the thing went further. "I'll tell you what it is, Marmaduke," he said, "you and I will become a couple of crusted old bachelors if we go on like this. When the shooting starts, I mean to ask some of the men with their wives this year; and I'll get Mary over from Greshamsbury to entertain them."

"I have just become a Bachelor of Arts," his brother reminded him. "I've never bothered to understand why they call it that; but after being talked to in starchified Latin by that old fellow I feel as if I ought to observe a kind of cloistral celibacy for at least a month or two afterwards. Still, I suppose married ladies wouldn't break the spell; I hope not."

Francis Thorne played with the window-sash uneasily. "That's all very well," he said, "but it's a bit dull for our other guests if we only have married ladies. There's young Harold Baker, for example, from Mill Hill; and Lufton hopes he will be able to come—everybody says he ought to be thinking of settling down."

"I don't mind as long as *I* don't have to settle down," replied Marmaduke. "It sounds an odious process. And are you going to ask the fair Van Skulpit? It would be a good thing if she made a match of it with Lufton; they want more height in that family."

Mr. Francis Thorne was not, it must be admitted, scheming for the future happiness of Lord Lufton when he conceived the idea of asking Miss Van Skulpit to join his house-party in September. But on this point he did not commit himself; he merely said, "I had thought of asking her, but I don't suppose she would want to come." A sentence whose drift it is possible that his brother may have perceived; but it is to be remembered that he was a young man, and less interested in what others said to him than in what he said to them.

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Meanwhile, *verbosa et grandis epistula venit a Capreis*; by which I mean that Bishop Grantley did, after some lapse of time, communicate with Marmaduke Thorne, as he had promised, by the general post. I must not be understood for a moment as suggesting any parallel between the career of Bishop Grantley and that of the emperor Tiberius, who was, unless his biographers have done him injustice, a precious old ruffian, whereas the family life of Bishop Grantley was beyond dispute blameless. Nevertheless, Bishop Grantley did feel some difficulty about saying what he had to say, just as the emperor Tiberius must have had some difficulty in ordering the execution of his old favourite; and we are free to imagine that more than one quill pen may have been chewed to pieces in the process of composition. This, at any rate, is what Bishop Grantley eventually wrote.

"The Palace, Barchester.

"MY DEAR MR. THORNE,

"It was exceedingly good of you to come over the other day and let me have a frank talk with you about your prospects. It is pleasant for us older men to get back, now and again, into the atmosphere of Oxford, and hear something about what the younger men are thinking. None the less, after careful consideration I cannot feel that it would be in your own best interests, were I to advise you at present to apply for admission to the ministry. When I say that, I do not doubt for a moment that you were and are actuated by high motives in forming that resolve. One of the hardest lessons we have to learn is that of distrusting our own highest aspirations, simply because they are ours. And I cannot feel certain, in your case, that you have sufficiently 'sat down to count the cost'; that you have fully envisaged—if I may be very plain with you—the seriousness of the step which you contemplate. I have every hope that those great gifts which you undoubtedly possess may be, sooner or later, devoted to the highest of all services. But my counsel to you is to postpone your decision for a year or two longer; to adopt, for the time being, some secular career, or possibly to travel, and see a little of the world for yourself before you go further with your present intentions. If, however, you disagree with this verdict, I think it would be best that you should go for (say) two years to the Theological College at Snaffleham, to the principal of which, an old friend of mine, I will gladly give you an introduction. Subject to his entertaining a favourable opinion of your earnestness and your theological attainments, I shall be happy, after the lapse of that time, to admit you to the diaconate. Pray believe that it is in your own highest interests I write thus, and sign myself,

"Yours most sincerely,

"S. BARCHESTER." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Proudie, it is well known, used to sign himself "T. Barnum" using the ancient name of the see. But this designation seems to have been dropped later, about the time when Messrs. Barnum and Bailey's Freak Show attained to the height of its popularity.

On reading through this letter, I am sorry to say that Mr. Marmaduke Thorne characterized the bishop as an old hypocrite, qualifying that estimate by the use of a vigorous epithet, which is sometimes used by the students of Oxford University, although only, I am glad to think, when they are strongly moved. He considered himself thoroughly ill-used. And it very commonly happens that those who think themselves ill-used suddenly begin to take a far higher view of their own merits and motives than any they had entertained hitherto; as if the glow of indignation which they feel lit up a kind of aura about their heads. A week before, if you had asked our hero why he wanted to be a clergyman, and what clerical ambitions he entertained, he would have told you very much what, as we have seen, he told his brother; viz. that it seemed the most obvious way of maintaining himself, seeing that the Thorne acres were not going to support him, and that he intended to spend his life as rector of Chaldicotes, doing as little work as a clergyman can possibly do. But when he discovered that the smooth-spoken prelate whom he had interviewed a few days earlier had formed just this estimate of him, his anger convinced him that this estimate was totally wrong. He was, he now told himself, drawn towards the ministry by a strong impulse to serve the cause of religion and to do good to his fellow-men. The bishop had seen fit to trample on his ambitions; to laugh at his honest zeal, and to doubt his high sincerity. Very well then, the bishop must be taught how wrong he had

been, what a chance he had missed—but how? The manner of doing this, to be sure, created a difficulty.

His mind flew back to the threat he had uttered the other day in jest. What if his career, after all, was not meant to be that of a clergyman, but that of a Romish priest? It was balm to the young gentleman's wounded feelings to reflect that, after all, the Church of England might not be too good for him—he might be too good for the Church of England. As to what the tenets of the Popish Church were, he had to admit to himself that his notions were altogether hazy. But it would do no harm to enquire; no doubt but he would find the absurdity of some had been much exaggerated. As for candles and incense and rich damask vestments, these, he felt sure, would appeal to him. Without mentioning his intentions even to his brother he set off, the same afternoon, on his bicycle, to demand an interview with the priest, Father Shuehorn.

This was a very earnest man that had long been resident in Barchester; having, indeed, succeeded to old Dr. Catacomb, whom I mentioned in my last chapter. Father Shuehorn it was who built the new church of St. Philomena down by the station, and did away with that fusty, tumbledown, yet withal pleasant old barn of a church which had served his congregation hitherto. He was determined to have something better and something Gothic; for which reason he employed one of the most celebrated architects of his time, and did indeed secure a Gothic structure, almost too Gothic, you would have

said, it was such a mass of crockets and ogees and flying buttresses and gargoyles; nay, it even had a leper's squint, which had to be regarded as merely ornamental—there being, fortunately, no lepers in the congregation. The chief thing to be said against St. Philomena's was that it had, somehow, too much the air of being built in competition with Barchester Cathedral, as if Father Shoehorn had asked Mr. Roodscreen to build him something like the Cathedral, only not quite so large. But in truth St. Philomena's did not bear looking into; for the flying buttresses were quite useless, the roof not being of stone, and all the mouldings of the arches, which had looked well enough in the plan, proved to be shallow in real life; nor can I think that Mr. Roodscreen was well advised to rest the communion table on pillars of red and green marble, set in gouty sockets of white dressed stone, or to flank it with a couple of plaster angels, who looked up very foolishly at the roof. Father Shoehorn, however, was inordinately proud of his church, and it certainly had the advantage, as he would consider it, of being very much resented in Cathedral circles. As Mrs. Grey said to Mrs. Green, a much cheaper building would have been sufficient for a few Irish railway-porters.

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Father Shoehorn did not belong to Barchester; he had been, a great many years ago, a clergyman in one of the Midland counties, until he was induced

by conscientious motives to embrace the Romish persuasion. The manner of his doing this was very much to his credit; for, after having worked for a while in a poor parish with no remuneration to speak of, he was offered, through the influence of a friend, a much wealthier living; and he had already written accepting of this offer, when he suddenly became convinced that he was playing traitor to his own conscience in doing so. He resigned his orders, therefore, and turned Papist, and now found himself in Barchester, making the best of a difficult business. His great desire was for the perversion of his fellow-countrymen, for which end he continued, so it was said, to lime his twigs—unlike old Dr. Catacomb, who never thought of a convert but as a bird which had flown into the room by accident, to the embarrassment of its occupants; although when he went to Birmingham and was introduced to the Great Auk himself the occasion, it was said, passed off quite happily. Father Shoehorn was a fowler by trade; but he spread the nets in the sight of the bird, not too successfully; for the birds of Barchester are shy birds, and are too well provided with the worms and slugs of this world to entertain the ambition of exchanging one twig for another. One or two of the smaller tradespeople had been induced to throw in their lot with St. Philomena's, but among the clergy and the country gentlemen there had, as yet, been no flutterings.

It was with high hopes, therefore, that Father Shoehorn greeted Mr. Marmaduke Thorne at the



door of his clergy-house; and it was with an eagerness very much more flattering to human vanity than Dr. Grantley's polished civility that he listened to his story. And when I use the word "story," I am afraid that the word is one which should be underlined; for the truth is Mr. Thorne had by now convinced himself, through long brooding over his grievance, that his desire to be ordained by Bishop Grantley had been no more than a youthful whim, of which he had repented in the nick of time. And the impression which he left with Father Shoehorn was, that Bishop Grantley had besought him, almost on bended knees, to accept of preferment in the Barchester diocese, whereas he had nobly spurned the offer, on the ground that the comfortable blandishments of a parsonage made no appeal to a temper so spiritual as his. And it is not to be wondered at if, in spite of the monocle and the four-in-hand tie, Father Shoehorn's heart went out to a young man whose experiences had been so similar to his own.

"I'm not a bit surprised, Mr. Thorne," he said; "indeed, the only wonder is there aren't more young men in your position who see the facts as you do. Of course, I know there's talk of trying to get the orders recognized at Rome; but it's all moonshine. In fact, if they do get a decision from Rome, I fancy it will be one that will cause searchings of heart among the clergy here." For Father Shoehorn was an enthusiast, and could not get rid of the idea that Bishop Grantley and Dean Linsey-Wolsey

and all the rest of the Barchester clergy would resign their benefices, if a bull were launched against the genuineness of their ordination. "However, you've had a great grace, Mr. Thorne, and I hope you'll be worthy of it. First thing, though, we must see about getting you instructed. Will you be spending long down here, or will you be in London, or where?"

Marmaduke, feeling a trifle relieved that there were some formalities to be observed before he found himself dressed in a Roman collar and a snuff-besprinkled cassock like Father Shoehorn's, said he would be at Chaldicotes anyhow till the end of September, and he supposed that would see it through. The priest, however, was not so confident.

"Well, we could make a start," he said. "I suppose, if all goes well, you might be received into the Church about Easter." Now, Marmaduke was sensible enough to realize that he would go through a very uncomfortable time among his friends and relations while he was waiting about, half a Papist already, and he did not at all relish the idea of kicking his heels so long on the doorstep. But he found it difficult to quarrel with his newly-found superiors thus early; so he contented himself with saying: "And then, about ordination? When would that happen?"

"Oh, that's a matter for the Bishop, of course. I wouldn't come into this diocese, if I were you; a young man like you, full of energy, ought to be in London, where there's more work to be done. I

expect you would have to wait for a year or so before you went into the seminary; and then it would only be a matter of six years more. You ought to be a priest well before you're thirty. What a grace, what a grace ! ”

I will not go so far as to say that Mr. Thorne's hair stood on end when he heard this pronouncement; for it is a matter of common experience that the human hair does not, in fact, easily abandon its horizontal position; and Mr. Thorne's hair was besides liberally drenched with a certain essence, recommended to him by his barber at Oxford, which would have been proof, it must be supposed, against a much more alarming situation. But I will go so far as to say that Mr. Thorne's spirits were considerably dashed, and that he sought the earliest possible opportunity for bringing the interview to a close. And on this occasion it was Mr. Thorne who said he would communicate his decision by the general post, at such time as he should have made up his mind where his highest duty lay.

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And now the expected day was at hand, when Mr. Francis Thorne's house-party should begin, and Mr. Francis Thorne's neighbours be free to shoot his partridges. One way and another, it was a very large party that had assembled. There was his widowed cousin, Mary Gresham, but none of her children were with her; there was Lord Lufton from Framley Court; and there was Sir Joseph

Gorse, the son of old Sir Harkaway. And there were others, whose memory lived then in the county, but has now perished; young Harold Baker, from Mill Hill, on the site of which Sir Andrew Guggenheim has built his more recent mansion; and Raymond Jackson from the Grange, where the Daughters of St. Tabitha have their great school; and the Bateson-Battersbys from Annesgrove, the same house which is now turned into the Bateson Arms, where people dance all night to the sound of the gramophone. And there were, in accordance with the audacious plan their host had formed, unmarried ladies there too; as, Miss Clantantram, who was considered something of a beauty in those days, and Patience Oriel, younger sister of that Miss Oriel whom I mentioned in my last chapter, and of course, the great Miss Van Skulptit. I am sorry to say that I cannot give the reader full particulars about the bag, but I believe the birds were tolerably plentiful. What was more of an innovation in Barchester, the ladies, and the gentlemen too when they were not engaged in the massacre of partridges, used to take out their machines in the afternoon and bicycle round the country-side, to the great annoyance of the horses they met, which were unaccustomed to this sort of thing and shied on the least opportunity.

And now entered rumour, painted full of tongues, and noised it abroad in the Cathedral Close (from which sounding-board, you may be sure, it spread easily to the rest of Barchester) that it was not by

accident, or for the sake of a mere whim, that Miss Van Skulpit had been asked over to Chaldicotes. It was known that Mr. Thorne's rents only just paid the interest on his mortgages; it was believed that he was still gambling and still losing heavily; it only remained for Mr. Thorne to do what his father had done—though his father at the time was only a country doctor—and marry money. As Mrs. Green said to Mrs. Grey, perhaps rather spitefully, "Ointment will tell." Nor, it must be admitted, was there lack of foundation for such gossip. Miss Van Skulpit seemed to be hugely taken with Chaldicotes, with the long oak avenues and the balustraded staircases by which it was entered; and Mr. Thorne took her round and shewed it to her all personally, while the others were out on their wheels (for Miss Van Skulpit was only just learning to bicycle) with the air of the lord of Burleigh when he said "All of this is mine and thine." Though indeed it was not Miss Van Skulpit's until she cared to pay for it, and it was not likely to remain much longer the property of Mr. Francis Thorne.

At last a day came when there was no shooting, and almost the whole party had gone out on their machines—including Miss Van Skulpit, who was venturing on the road for the first time, Marmaduke having now assured her that she would be quite safe under his escort. They were paying a visit to Greshamsbury, where luncheon was prepared for them; and their intention was to come back by a

longer route, through Courcy and Uffley, for the sake of variety. Francis Thorne found himself alone, therefore, with his cousin Mary Gresham, who was arranging the flowers. (And I wonder whether she remembered that she had been arranging the flowers at Boxall Hill, the best part of forty years before, when she urged her friend Miss Dunstable to make a match of it with her beloved uncle, Dr. Thomas Thorne?) Mary Gresham was still beautiful, in spite of years and white hair; there were few ladies in Barsetshire who carried themselves so well or so turned men's heads to look their way in a drawing-room. And she kept the sensible head she always had, and the same slight fondness for arranging other people's affairs for them.

"Well, Cousin Francis," she said after a pause, "do you know that Barchester credits you with a transformation?"

"What transformation?"

"They say you have turned into a marrying man."

"Then it's confoundedly impertinent of them—what does it mean, anyhow, a marrying man?" (Did Mary Gresham remember that she had objected to the same phrase, on that earlier occasion, saying that it sounded as if some men were in the habit of getting married three or four times a month?) "I'm not so old as all that, Mary; and I don't see why I should be expected to live the rest of my days entirely in the company of my own sex, to

please a few old chatterboxes in the Close." It will be seen that Mr. Thorne was put out; but then, which of us is not put out when he finds that his deep-laid schemes are transparent as glass to the eyes of Mrs. Grey and Mrs. Green?

"Very well, then, we won't talk about it." And Mrs. Gresham got up from her chair again and set about arranging the flowers.

"And now you are angry with me," said her cousin.

"No, I'm not," replied Mary; "I lack courage, that's all. I lack courage to tell you that I believe you'd be happier if you condemned yourself to spend the rest of your days in the company of one of the opposite sex. There! And now perhaps *you* are angry with *me*, Cousin Francis?"

"No, I'm not. I was only thinking what a lot of time women must put in talking gossip, to be able to keep abreast of everybody else's business as they do."

"When they might be doing something worth while—shooting partridges for example."

"Never mind; I can see that you are going to talk to me for my good. Let's have it."

"I'll spare you the lecture on one condition."

"What's that?"

"That you put your hand on your heart, Frank Thorne, and tell me you have no idea in your mind—none at all—about making a proposal of marriage."

"Well—and if I have?"

"Frank, don't tantalize me. Who is it to be? The fair Clantantram?"

"Is that what they are saying in Barchester?"

"There! And I thought you were quite indifferent to gossip! If you want to know what they are saying in Barchester, they are saying that you are to carry off the fair Van Skulpit on your saddle-bow. They treat it as an accomplished fact; and I was assured the other day that the bishop is writing another letter to Marmaduke, offering to ordain him after all, since there is to be money in the family."

"She wouldn't have me," objected Francis.

"What do you bet? If she isn't in love with you, she's in love with Chaldicotes already, anybody could see that. If that's your only difficulty, why not ask her? She's the best judge, after all."

Francis Thorne got up, and stood facing her on the other side of the flower-bowl, fidgeting with the blossoms. "Mary," he said, "I don't know what you'll think of me for saying this; probably you will tell me I am the worst kind of snob. But I do believe in blood. Father did, you know, too."

"But he married a Dunstable," retorted Mary. She was thinking, perhaps, of her own family history—though she did not know that Miss Van Skulpit was her own mother's descendant.

"I know; and that makes me ask myself, is it right to dilute the blood a second time? Perhaps if she weren't rich, if I weren't so hard pressed, it would be different; but I feel it now as a kind of temptation. Am I talking nonsense?"



"Yes," said Mary. And here their interview was interrupted by the return of the cycling party, very hot and dusty after their exertions. Miss Van Skulpit, however, was not with them; some mishap had occurred to her machine, when they were only a few miles out from Chaldicotes; and since it seemed that the damage could be repaired, Marmaduke had stayed behind to do this, while the rest of the party carried out their original programme, returning by Courcy and Uffley. It was surprising, Mrs. Bateson-Battersby said, they were not returned yet. Francis, expressing alarm lest the lady should have met with some injury on the hill, started to walk out in that direction, while the others were taken off to have tea by Mrs. Gresham. As it proved, he had not far to go; he met the two at the end of the oak avenue, Marmaduke gallantly wheeling both machines, while the lady picked up her skirts to ease her feet for climbing the slope.

"Guess you've got to get accustomed to me," she said as Francis approached, with the directness of her race. "I'm going to be your sister-in-law."

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The sale of Ullathorne Court to the town council of Barchester did not suffice to set Francis Thorne's affairs in order, and he was shortly afterwards compelled to leave Chaldicotes, which was sold, later, to the Marquis of Hartletop. He himself retired to Greshamsbury, where he helped to look after his cousin's estate. As for Marmaduke and his wife,

they had by this time sailed for America, where they spent a great deal of their money in promoting unsuccessful theatrical ventures. But of Marmaduke's clerical ambitions nothing more was ever heard; nor was Father Shoehorn put to the trouble of instructing him in matters of theology.

### III

#### IS SHE NOT FAST ?

I HAVE said that Mr. Francis Thorne, having got through his own patrimony, went off to manage the estates of his kinsmen, the Greshams, of Greshamsbury and Boxall Hill. And lest it should be thought that this was a rash experiment on their part, let me assure the reader that a man may be a bad husband of his own property, and yet an excellent steward, when he is set down to manage the property of others. "A Barset pig," Mr. Bunce assured me in telling the story, "is never black but in spots"; and although that native breed to which he refers is fast dying out, and you will see little but Berkshires and Large Whites all the way from Stoke Pinguin to Hoggstock, the application of his parable is true enough when you refer it to the landed gentleness of the county, and for that matter, let us hope, to mankind in general. Mr. Francis Thorne did excellently well for the estate; and that at a time when it needed prudent management. For it was still paying death duties after the death of our old friend Frank Gresham when his son, Arthur Gresham, went off to fight the Dutch in South Africa; by which time his mother was dead

too, and his sister Maud, though by all accounts she was a great hand at interfering in other people's business, had little notion of looking after her own.

I suppose there was hardly a place in the county less altered, at this time, by the passing of years than Greshamsbury. True, the inhabitants no longer called it Greemsbury, but pronounced it as it was spelt; for with the coming of education they had learned how to write and forgotten how to talk; and the little church in which Caleb Oriel used to say his mattins at daybreak was refurnished now with a quantity of cane-bottomed chairs and cheap brass. But the shape of the village, which stretched along a right angle of road (as the reader will remember) between the house and the park, did not lend itself to enlargement. It lay, besides, in an angle between two great lines of railway, the old line through Silverbridge to Guestwick and the West, and the new extension beyond Barchester to Uffley and the South, so that the streams of civilization mercifully passed it by. The four pagans still stood with their clubs over the gate, pointing to the legend "Gardez Gresham" as if they would keep the world away; the lime avenue, thinned here and there, still stretched up to a horizon undisfigured by factory chimneys; and the old Tudor house remained unaltered, though there was talk of installing bathrooms at Boxall Hill.

There dwelt Arthur Gresham with his sisters Maud and Ida; for he was not yet married, and it was thought that these two ladies were in no hurry

to usher him into that state of felicity, being uncommonly well off where they were. He was a man that had grown much into his surroundings, from the circumstance of having all that he wanted close by him, without having to go abroad and look for it; the hounds met at his door, the pheasants whirled through his shrubberies, and it was his boast that there could be no damage done in the estate which his own workmen could not repair. Nevertheless, our hero was neither worldly nor an idler; he had been brought up to strict notions of honour and duty, and took the responsibility of his position seriously enough. The worst his enemies—and they were few—had to say about him was, that he was something of a prig.

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That the South African War stirred Barchester to its depths was more than I could ever discover. True, there is a monument on the London Road which commemorates it, in the form of a soldier with a sun helmet who appears to be represented in the act of hailing a cab; and on the plinth of this monument a large number of names are inscribed, being those of the Barsetshire men who fought for their country upon that occasion. But Barchester (like most garrison towns) has rather a low opinion of the military profession, the planets of Mars and Venus being often uncomfortably conjoined in the horoscopes of its inhabitants. And the names which live imperishably on that stone plinth were, for the

most part, those of scapegrace sons and young men who had got themselves into trouble, as young men will. So that it was an effort to the citizens of Barchester—an effort which, nevertheless, they loyally took upon themselves—to shew the proper dispositions of agonized concern when troopship after troopship left the adjacent seaport, loaded with those nearest and dearest whom they had been carefully keeping at arm's length for several years back. Indeed, if the full truth must be told, the prevailing feeling among the Barchester housewives was one of anxiety at finding a whole fresh batch of recruits, wearing the halo of active service, hanging round the backs of their premises.

Nevertheless, Barchester was not without its share in that heroic conflict. As Mrs. Grey said to Mrs. Green, either of them sitting over a half-finished khaki stocking, "this is a civilian's war." Mr. Bunce assures me—but I doubt, sometimes, the accuracy of his memory in matters liturgical—that the Litany was never rendered in the Cathedral during those years without a special suffrage for those who were in any ways afflicted or distressed, in mind, body, or estate, "as the result of this terrible war in South Africa." The recollection, he says, still brings tears to his eyes; although it may be that such tears, shed by the very old, bear witness rather to the distance than to the poignancy of their memories. If there was, sometimes, a dearth of authentic news from the scene of operations, you may be sure that the black-and-white artists who

then contributed to the illustrated papers were alert to make good the deficiency, representing such hairbreadth 'scapes and such tragic encounters, that you would have sworn they had been to South Africa themselves. Nor did the haberdashers of Barchester fail to supply patriotic badges in large quantity; and, moreover, celluloid buttons, which familiarised the rising generation with the features of our leading generals, even such of them as had already been sent home for mismanaging our affairs. In a word, Barchester felt itself to be a city at war; nor did the output of comforts for the troops fail until the treaty had been actually signed, and the first batches of returning warriors were being greeted at Southampton.

Among these, our friend Arthur Gresham stepped ashore, feeling, if the truth must be told, very little of a hero, and devoutly hoping that his arrival would not be signalized by any demonstration, unless it were the sisterly rejoicings of Miss Ida and Miss Maud. Here, however, he was gravely at fault; for although the garrison of Barchester had been a good deal depleted during the time of hostilities, Barchester itself had not been much represented in the higher command. And the return of a volunteer officer, the head of a well-known Barssetshire family, who had been mentioned more than once in the newspapers, and had even contrived to hold a fortified position of sorts against a considerable contingent of rebel farmers, was not lightly to be passed over. Accordingly, there were

great doings in Barchester, with a public meeting and the town band playing "See the Conquering Hero comes," and a banquet at the Town Hall, where the beards wagged merrily enough. And Arthur Gresham was presented with the freedom of the city, an honour which has been conferred on no one else, Mr. Bunce says, within his memory.

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Among the speeches which were made upon this occasion, none caused more surprise and, it must be confessed, more relief, than that of Sir Methuselah Stopgap, the sitting member for the Eastern Division of Barchester. This gentleman had been adopted as the Conservative candidate for the division when Francis Gresham, our hero's father, had been compelled by ill-health to relinquish his seat; and having once obtained an entrance into the House of Commons, he shewed no disposition to abandon it. Nor did it seem likely that he would ever be worn out by the duties of his office, since he rarely attended a Parliamentary debate and, when he did so, never lifted up his voice except to snore. I say therefore that it was a surprise, and something of a relief, when this veteran statesman declared publicly that he was applying for the stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds; adding, that it was his dearest wish to see their friend, Major Gresham, elected to Parliament in his stead. The applause evoked by this announcement was discreetly modulated, as such applause ever should be, but there was no doubt



that Sir Methuselah had said the popular thing. Nor did the citizens of East Bassetshire lose any time in carrying his wish into effect. Indeed, for a time it seemed that the election would not even be contested; for the de Courcys, who still held themselves to be the leaders of Whig society, let it be known that they would give their moral support to this relative of theirs who had fought for his country. In the end, the powerful influence of Dr. Rantaway, the well-known Barchester divine, secured the adoption of a Liberal candidate. But the gentleman in question, Mr. Albion Small, was howled down at all his meetings and failed miserably at the polls; being glad, some said, to have escaped with his life.

Major Gresham, then, was duly returned to Parliament as member for the Eastern division of Bassetshire; and none was a more loyal supporter of his Majesty's, late her Majesty's, Government. But alas! all was not well with Mount Olympus, and the gods were tottering on their thrones; some held that it could be only a matter of months before they were ousted by the giants, and this because their own counsels were fatally divided. Nor is it necessary to invoke the Muse to tell us whence this strife arose among the immortals. The apple of discord had been flung down in their assembly by that unruly Neptune who went off one day to banquet with the blameless Ethiopians, and came back to tell us that the days of our Empire were numbered unless we would tax the goods sent to us

by the foreigner, and give easier terms to our own kinsmen beyond the seas. Hence those tears, that wrath in the celestial bosoms; had not our country lived and flourished by freedom of trade this last half century, ever since those fifty-three patriots censured the repeal of the Corn Laws, and were afterwards deserted by their leader? In a twinkling the whole British public had fallen to talking economics; and it was reported that two total strangers, discussing the matters in a third-class railway carriage, had fallen to blows over it, and had to be separated by the guard at the next station. And matters were hardly better, as I have said, on the slopes of Olympus itself. Some gods were for Cobdenism still, and it was rumoured that Somnus had threatened to withdraw himself from the celestial counsels. Some were for protecting our own British agriculture, be the expense to the town-dwellers what it might; others would protect only manufacturing industries, others again were for helping the colonies before all else. Meanwhile the master of the gods himself gave forth obscure oracles; he brandished, to be sure, the thunderbolt of the tariff, but some said he was for using it as a threat only, till he should have brought back the recalcitrant foreigners to their senses.

Discord was found even in the dining-room at Greshamsbury, where Mr. Francis Thorne, who lived in his own cottage on the estate, was partaking for once of his cousin's hospitality. "A present from Brummagem," said Mr. Francis Thorne.

Whereby he gave it to be understood that in his view the promises made by our legislators were cheap and flashy articles, such as you might expect from the industrial Midlands; that he, Mr. Francis Thorne, held such Greek gifts to be worse than no gifts at all, and that Major Gresham would do well to be on his guard against them. But then, Mr. Thorne had imbibed much of his political philosophy from his cousin, Mr. Wilfrid Thorne, whose disgusted retirement from the life of the county, after the Corn Law Repeal, those earlier chronicles have made known to us. "What's Bassetshire got to do with Colonial Preference?" he added, lest the train of his thought should be obscure to his audience.

"That's all very well, Frank," said Major Gresham, laughing, "but they can't stop there, once they've opened the whole question of tariffs. They can't go on doing nothing for agriculture; look at the state we're in."

"There I think you're unreasonable, Arthur," objected his sister Maud, always quick to resent any imputation against the progress of the age she lived in. "Think of what Mamma used to have to do for the tenants, thirty or forty years ago—they're much better off now." Then she added, with a woman's quick descent from the universal to the particular, "Look at the Podgenses."

Her brother, however, refused to have his attention distracted by the contemplation of such rural idylls. "Oh, they've done well enough so far, but it can't last, and it isn't lasting. Look at the

way they're going off into the towns, all the best of them; look at Hogglesstock."

"And why shouldn't they go into the towns, if the towns have more to offer them?" Miss Gresham sat on many committees in Barchester, and on the whole preferred to have her poorer neighbours huddled together at close quarters, so that she could send inspectors round to report on their habits, instead of having to visit them herself, family by family, in outlying cottages. "I gave you that report to read only the day before yesterday, Arthur, but I am perfectly certain you never looked at it. You'll find there that lunacy and crimes of violence are far more common in the country than in Barchester, or in Hogglesstock either, for that matter."

"Naturally," Mr. Thorne pointed out; "of course, it's the most intelligent people who make for the towns, and leave the village populated by village idiots. We're losing all the best people; that's Arthur's point."

"And I'm sure they're welcome to go," retorted the lady. "Much better for them to be at Hogglesstock, making drain-pipes and things, than hang about in the country where there's no work for them except scaring foxes."

It argues well for the manners of the two gentlemen that neither of them took exception to this peculiar description of rural pursuits. "It's all very well for us, Maud," said her brother, "because we haven't, fortunately for us, got to make our living out of the estate. But it's hard on people like the

Bateson Battersbys. Still, we're talking about labourers, not landlords. And my point is——"

"You must keep your basic industries going," put in his cousin. "That's the whole fallacy of the Free Trade business."

Miss Ida, who was well-read and liked people to know it, welcomed the opportunity of a digression into pure theory. "Suppose," she began, "that you had three people living on a desert island——"

"Desert island be blowed," said her brother. "The point is, you must have a yeoman population if you're ever going to war again. The Boers shewed us that; man for man, they were better every time. Besides, suppose we do get into a war, where's the food going to come from, eh?"

"We still have a fleet, my dear Arthur," said Miss Maud, "and I understand we still have some Colonies. I quite fail to see why a war should make any difference to our food supply, I must say."

"And what about submarines?" insisted her brother. "I wonder if you know how many submarines the French navy has got at this moment?"

"Submarines, indeed!" scoffed Miss Gresham; "I suppose you'll be telling me the French will invade England in balloons, next! Well, you may bring your Tariff Reform League here if you like"—for this was the original point in debate, which had led to the argument—"but you will ruin your chances of being re-elected if you do. Everybody says so; Dean Plumblin told me so, only yesterday." And so the discussion ended; for it

was well known that what Dean Plumblin said, that Miss Maud Gresham believed.

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Now, I have no doubt whatever that the Cobdenite principles held by Miss Gresham were sincerely held, with an honest conviction in their favour. But I think it is permissible to wonder, whether Miss Gresham's insistence on those principles would have been quite so strong at this juncture, had it not been that the cause of Tariff Reform was bound up in her mind, as in the minds of all Barchester folk, with the personality of Miss Diana Lookaloft. It will be remembered that when Miss Thorne of Ullathorne gave her *fête champêtre*, Farmer Greenacre and his family were content to regale themselves in the large tent which had been provided for all and sundry; but their neighbours, the Lookalofts, more adventurous and perhaps less considerate, came to the luncheon in evening dress, and insisted upon being shewn in with the quality, so that they shared their meal with bishops and archdeacons, nay, with the Countess de Courcy herself. One of that party was the son of the house, Augustus, "that wretched Gussie," as the Greenacres called him; and it is his daughter, Diana, whose fortunes now concern us.

If it be asked how the granddaughter of an honest farmer like Tom Lookaloft could be in a position to awaken sisterly alarm in Miss Gresham of Greshamsbury, it must be answered that Fortune

favours the brave, and that she seldom held out such tangible rewards to her votaries as in the last years of the Great Queen. When old Mr. Wilfrid Thorne died, a man like Farmer Greenacre was well content to hold his lease from the new squire of Ullathorne, Dr. Thomas Thorne, instead. Not so Augustus Lookaloft, who, now filled his father's shoes. The new squire's heart was at Chaldicotes, not at Ullathorne; the Ullathorne estate was unwieldy, and, just where the Lookaloft demense jutted out from it, bordered somewhat too closely on the suburbs of Barchester. Mr. Lookaloft bought the title-deeds of his farm with money he had borrowed from Mr. Forrest, the banker. Soon after this, Mr. Forrest himself disappeared from the life of the town, and Forrest's Bank became the Barchester branch of Messrs. Jack and Pott—though Mr. Forrest's name was still over the door. Mr. Lookaloft proceeded to borrow some more money, on the security of a number of ugly little red-brick houses which he proceeded to erect on his land; the rents of which—for Barchester was now growing in that direction—paid him so handsomely that, after discharging his debt to Messrs. Jack and Pott, he was a very rich man indeed. Later, he bought more land of the same kind and developed it on the same principle; he acquired an interest, too, in the great brick-and-tile works at Hoggstock; and by the turn of the century Mr. Lookaloft could have paid the Dean and chapter a year's stipend without feeling the loss to his own banking account.

I need hardly explain that Mr. Lookaloft, having a great sense of social values, did not propose to do any such thing. But he did subscribe very largely to the fund which Dean Plumblin raised for shoring up the East End of the cathedral; partly in his own name and partly (for he had, as I say, a great sense of social values) in such a way that his identity was not made public. He had married, when he was nearly fifty and already possessed of a considerable fortune, Mary Walker, the attorney's daughter at Silverbridge. Their only child, Diana, was brought up at a very expensive school on the Continent of Europe; and when she was launched into Barchester society, in the early days of King Edward's reign, Barchester society was made agreeably aware that she inherited her mother's good looks, as well as the more tangible attractions which she owed to her father. A fresh outburst of benefactions followed, made by Mr. Lookaloft in his daughter's name, and there was no doubt, at first, of her welcome. As Mrs. Green said to Mrs. Grey, it was so rare nowadays to find great wealth treated as a stewardship.

I have written "at first," because I am sorry to say that as far as the ladies of Barchester were concerned, Miss Lookaloft's good reputation was short-lived. She spent a season in London, and before it was half over word came to Barchester that Miss Lookaloft was rather fast. Some even would have it that she smoked, but this was not generally credited. It was undeniable, though, that she sat up late at night playing bridge, for heavy stakes;



undeniable, too, that she used slangy expressions; and the story rested on good authority that she had been seen riding in Rotten Row (though, it is true, very early in the morning) dressed in—well, what one could only call knickerbockers. The last thing one would want to do would be to take away anybody's character, but facts were facts, and it was no good blinking them. It was fair to remember, of course, that the poor girl hadn't had many advantages in youth; but, look at it which way you would, the whole thing was unfortunate, very unfortunate; and perhaps the dear Dean had let his well-known charity run away with him.

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I am sorry to say that these hesitations were not echoed in the bosoms of the gentlemen of Barchester—I mean, of the laity; for, although she did go to the Bishop's garden-party, it was notorious that she practically asked herself. But I am sorry to say that the gentlemen of Barchester described her as a topping good sort; and protested loudly that they would all go into mourning on her wedding-day. And indeed Miss Lookaloft, as if she was anxious to spare so much pain to her admirers, seemed well content with the liberties of the single state; nor did she shew any indication of having found an *Endymion*, until she met our friend Arthur Gresham at the Bishop's garden-party. It is doubtful whether at that time he even knew who she was, but it was supposed that he must have created an impression

where he had received none; for it was observable, from that day onwards, that Miss Lookaloft took an intense interest in politics, founding a Conservative club in Barchester, and burying her pretty head in closely-written blue-books, to the despair of the neighbourhood. Naturally she met Mr. Gresham again; they served together on Committees, and were croquet partners at the Primrose League *fête*; so that Barchester gossip, always quick at leaping to conclusions, decided that it was a match, in spite of twenty years' disparity in their respective ages.

It was not surprising, therefore, that Miss Maud Gresham should feel anxious about her brother. Nor was it surprising that in this perplexity she should turn to Courcy Castle for advice, and possibly for help. True, the relationship of the Greshams to the de Courcys was not a close one; their grandmother and the last earl but one having been brother and sister. Nor, it must be admitted, did Mary Gresham, once Mary Thorne, ever aspire to cordial intimacy with her husband's aunts and uncles. Nevertheless, the Greshams and the de Courcys were neighbours; the distance was an easy bicycle-ride, and, since these motors came in, a mere nothing unless you had a break-down. So Miss Gresham was a frequent visitor at Courcy Castle; and you may be sure it was not long after the Bishop's garden-party that she found herself closeted with the reigning Countess, who had been a Boanerges and was, in those days, one of the great political hostesses.

"One doesn't so much mind her being nobody," Miss Gresham was saying. "After all, nobody is anybody nowadays. And I daresay the stories about her are exaggerated. But she's so, so unsuited to poor Arthur in every way; mad about cars, you know, and bridge and all that. I'm sure you must see that, dear Victoria, as well as I do. But he can be so pig-headed when he likes."

"It's not merely that," said the Countess; "it's her influence on him we've got to think of—politically, I mean. If he means to go in with the Birmingham crowd—and she's all out for them—we shall have to run a candidate against him." Now the Countess de Courcy was a Liberal; but not, as she was apt to say, bigoted about her creed. "So much more satisfactory," she added, "having somebody from the county that one can trust. The constituency won't stand for this Tariff business, that's quite certain; and we can't risk their running a Labour man."

"Men are such abject fools," sighed Miss Gresham. "And he's the dangerous age, too."

"Of course he is. And then, wasting whole years of his life chivvyng round after the Boers like that, he's hardly met any women. I hoped at one time that something would come of that de Guest affair, but I don't believe there was ever really anything in it."

"I was wondering," said the other, now delicately leading up to her point, "whether perhaps if you asked him over here and got him to meet some really

nice people, people of his own sort, you know, he wouldn't see the difference. He's always been so devoted to you, Victoria."

This last statement was, I am sorry to say, wholly untrue. Major Gresham was, indeed, prepared to treat his influential neighbour with all the respect that a Countess may be supposed to deserve. But in point of actual fact her company jarred on him; and on the last occasion when she had lectured him about politics he had expressed, although privately, a wish that she would go and drown herself. But ladies find it necessary to say these polite things to one another, even when there is no truth in them whatsoever. Lady de Courcy did not believe that Major Gresham was fond of her; and Miss Gresham knew that this was the case. Nevertheless, she found it convenient to assume the existence of such a hidden attachment, for her own purposes at the moment.

"I'll tell you what I *could* do," said the Countess, with sudden energy. "I've got a house-party here three weeks from now—nobody very interesting, you know, just young people; the Altstein boy, and the Mornington Crescents, all rather jolly, and I think they'd amuse him. What about asking him then? I'm sure if he got to know some more girls——"

"Yes, but would he come?"

"That's just what I was going to say; I must get him to come by asking somebody else too, a real live lion, if I can think of one. Political, for choice; a real non-sneeze introduction. I know—

Archie Medmenham; I'm sure he'd rally round in a good cause, and at least he might knock this silly tariff business out of him. Yes, he'll do for my trump card; leave it all to me, Maud, and we'll make a fool of the Lookaloft girl yet."

So the matter was arranged; and in due time a letter came from Lady de Courcy, asking if Major Gresham could possibly manage to come over for Saturday to Monday; Lord Medmenham would be there, and she was so anxious to let him have somebody to talk to—all the rest, by bad luck, were just boys and girls! And it really was disgraceful the way Major Gresham cut all his old friends since he went to Westminster; he really must manage to get away just for once. Lady de Courcy could easily send the car, and save him any kind of trouble.

If Major Gresham really felt any deep attachment to Lady de Courcy, the receipt of this letter did not lead him to betray it. He did not rub his hands; neither did he pass one hand across his hair and square his shoulders, in the manner of gentlemen, now growing elderly, who receive a compliment. Nevertheless, it would be idle to deny that Major Gresham felt flattered. Lord Medmenham was a great personage of the day; and although he was on the wrong side in politics, he was a useful person to know—of that there was no doubt. So it was not long before Lady de Courcy received an intimation that Major Gresham would be delighted to spend Saturday to Monday at Courcy Castle; she must not, however, dream of putting herself out to send

the car for Major Gresham, who would drive himself over in his trap and send the man back with it.

And what were Major Gresham's thoughts as he drove over, that day, the seven or eight miles which separated him from Courcy Castle? They did not rest entirely, I am sorry to say, with Miss Lookaloft. For although the attentions for which Miss Lookaloft had singled him out—if it be possible to say so much, without offence, of a young lady's behaviour towards a gentleman—had not failed to arouse his attention, or to awake in him a gratifying sense of self-esteem, he was still far from imagining Miss Lookaloft as the chatelaine of Greshamsbury; or considering, in a more mercenary spirit, whether it would be possible for the hounds to come back there, if Miss Lookaloft's very considerable fortune were added to his own. No, our hero was still fancy-free; and feeling, as he did, younger than his years, it is possible that he allowed his thoughts to wander in the direction of those two jolly girls, Grace (wasn't it?) and Betty, who had still been wearing their hair in flaps when he went out to South Africa, and allowed themselves all the liberties of speech and behaviour which go with that particular style of coiffure. Why, they must be out by now; for all he knew, one or the other of them might be engaged. If not, would they still be as welcoming as ever to that distant cousin who was no longer (alas!) in his thirties, but had acquired a certain halo of military

glory instead? Probably they would think him a back number; for he was conscious that the world had been moving on without him, and that the manners of young ladies were less decorous than they had been in the 'nineties.

It was a rainy day in late summer, and the light was already beginning to fade when he approached Courcy Castle. Had he been conversant in more detail with the history of his family, he would have known that it was almost exactly fifty years since his father had taken that same journey; that he might be introduced to, and if possible might wed, the vulgar owner of great wealth, not that he might be saved from such an entanglement. All this Arthur Gresham did not know; nor for that matter did he know for what reason the Countess de Courcy had invited him over upon that occasion. If Greshams' bury House had changed little in those fifty years, Courcy Castle had changed a good deal. For the de Courcys, like many of the great Whig families, had followed new fashions in the matter of artistic culture, and were no longer content with the heavy wallpapers and monstrous gilt-backed chairs which their forefathers had declared to be so elegant. Courcy Castle was still a somewhat unattractive pile; and the castellated parapet still evoked the image of defiant, but miniature artillery as you drew near to it. But the large paddocks had been opened out into flowing vistas of park land; there was a walled garden on one side, built, it must be supposed, from the old brick of some dismantled outhouse, and the

ground just outside the garden doors was occupied by a spacious lawn-tennis court, beautifully mowed and marked out. All this was fair enough to look upon when the sun was shining, but on a rainy day, like that on which Arthur Gresham visited it, it must be confessed that the Castle retained, in great degree, its old atmosphere of gloom.

The great door stood open as he drove up, and a flood of light poured out into the drive. Through it, also, became audible a series of heavy bumps, apparently on the staircase, which would have made the visitor suppose that other guests were leaving the house with a quantity of luggage, but that they were accompanied by loud shrieks and frequent laughter. Our hero stood at the door irresolute, very much as we may suppose Childe Roland to have stood in front of the Dark Tower, collecting himself before setting the slughorn to his lips. His indecision was cut short by the sudden appearance, through the door, of a young man hopping on one leg, whom he recognised with some difficulty as the Honourable John de Courcy. "Hullo, George," cried the young man, evidently mistaking his identity. "I say, it's awful, I've lost my shoe. You haven't seen my shoe anywhere, have you? My hat, it's not George at all—why, it's Arthur Gresham! Do you toboggan, sir? Because we're tobogganing down the stairs, on baths, you know; and it hurts like billyho if you come off at the corners. Come on in," and he led his reluctant guest into the hall, where he introduced him to occasional figures that flashed



past him down the staircase, and took, it must be admitted, little notice of him when thus accosted.

Lady de Courcy was in the great drawing-room, superintending what seemed to be furnishing alterations at the top of her voice. "Arthur, how jolly to see you!" she cried. "We're just getting the room ready for charades; they want to have charades after dinner. George, you mug, not that screen; the big one over by the fireplace! Oh, Arthur, the most awful thing's happened; I'm completely desolated about it—Archie Medmenham, you know, he can't come after all. He's got to go to some absurd function with royalty mixed up in it; quite too ridiculous. I did think of putting you off—why don't you have the telephone put in at Greshamsbury? You really ought to—and then I thought no I wouldn't, because it is so nice to get just a tiny peep at you like this. Grace, my dear, stop fooling with that table, it's much, much too heavy for you, and take Arthur Gresham and show him where his room is. Dinner's at eight, if anybody's dressed by then."

It is recorded of Mr. Frank Gresham in the 'fifties, that he found Courcy Castle a dull place to stay in. Such were not the impressions which his son derived either at the moment of entering the house, or in the course of his stay. The charades after dinner were cleverly done, no doubt; but they seemed to be largely an excuse for the young ladies to dress up as young gentlemen; and one scene contained a highly offensive representation of that statesman whom, at this time, Arthur Gresham regarded as

his political leader. When he rose next morning, in bright sunshine, to the stillness of a Sunday morning in the country, he did, indeed, anticipate a day of greater restfulness. But although Lady de Courcy managed to carry off with her to church a few unwary guests who were rash enough to shew themselves in public before eleven, most of the house-party stayed away, and were noisily playing lawn-tennis when the villagers returned, in sedate file, from their morning orisons. Nor was there reserved for him, as he had hoped, that leisurely progress round farm, and dairy, and coverts which was, at Greshamsbury, his weekly recreation. Instead, he must be packed into a motor and haled off, amid clouds of dust, to a watering-place some twenty-five miles distant, where tea was partaken of at an expensive hotel. Altogether it is not to be wondered at if Major Gresham found the Saturday to Monday little to his liking; and came back without any increased admiration for the fashionable young misses of his time.

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Nevertheless, I do not know that Major Gresham would have been precipitated into the embraces of Miss Lookaloft if his sister had been content to let well alone. But that lady, thinking to follow up her advantage, did contrive to express, on the day before the Tariff Reform Fête at Greshamsbury Park, some doubts as to whether it were quite wise to let Miss Lookaloft take the chair at the great

speech to be made on that occasion by the Member for Crewe Junction; and whether it was suitable that an enormous bouquet of roses should be handed to her by the head girl of the Greshamsbury Free School, in recognition of the services so rendered. After all, it was not so very long ago that Augustus Lookaloft used to touch his hat to Francis when they met in the lanes at Ullathorne. And besides—well, Miss Gresham did not put on record her opinion that Miss Lookaloft was fast; but she disclaimed that opinion with so much of unnecessary beating about the bush, that her brother very clearly saw what she meant to insinuate.

It is our experience that gentlemen will put up with a good deal of advice from their female relatives in matters appertaining to social decorum, so long as no opportunity is given to them of saying, that the criticisms so made are uncharitable criticisms. On this occasion, Major Gresham did accuse his sister of uncharity; or rather, he accused of uncharity anonymous critics behind whose alleged opinions Miss Gresham was masking her own. It is not necessary to give any full report of his speech, for it is the kind of speech that has been made a thousand times on similar occasions. The upshot was (as Miss Gresham, had she been a wiser woman, would have foreseen) that her brother got up the next morning determined to make amends to Miss Lookaloft for all the slights cast upon her by the busybodies of the county, if necessary by exaggerated attentions. And moreover it must be confessed that

Miss Lookaloft dazzled the eyes of all beholders when she came on to the platform; that she held herself well, too, and looked the great lady all over when the bouquet was presented to her—although perhaps Mrs. Green was justified in saying that the display of teeth was a little too reminiscent of the variety stage, and Mrs. Grey may be pardoned for questioning the suitability of her kissing Miss Peppermint, the young lady from the Greshamsbury Free School, when the roses had been duly presented, and smelt, and applauded.

Miss Maud Gresham did not approve of her brother's action in making a lion of Miss Lookaloft, or indeed in holding a Tariff Reform Fête at all. But she was proud of her position as the acting mistress of Greshamsbury, and you may be sure that the preparations she had made were of the very best. Never had iced coffee been iced to so exactly the right temperature, never had claret-cup been more nicely calculated to fulfil the office of cheering but not intoxicating, never had cress sandwiches been cut so thin, or hydrangeas massed with such powerful effect, in all the history of Barsetshire. And all the county was there—at least, all that part of the county which held Conservative principles—regardless of fiscal shibboleths. The Bishop of Barchester was there, his finely-chiselled features expressing a kind of Christian determination to tax the foreigner; though not the Dean, who had notions of his own on most points, and indeed was considered little better than a Radical. The Luftons were there from

Framley, and the Bakers, and the Bateson Battersbys, and many more, of whom rumour is silent. And the Member for Crewe Junction was there, very resplendent in his top hat and very gracious to everybody, calling Major Gresham "my dear fellow" in front of them all.

And now, had I the pen of a Bulwer Lytton, I would transfer on to my own page all the glowing oratory of the Member for Crewe Junction; how he called upon the constituents of East Barsetshire to bethink them of their kinsmen across the seas, toiling to produce wheat for them from the rocky prairies of Canada, or chilling mutton for them in New Zealand, or making wine and labelling it Burgundy quality in the mysterious heart of Australia; how he appealed to their sense of fair play, to know whether it were not monstrous that other men, who did not share a drop of our blood, should be enabled to supply us with such commodities at a cheaper rate, merely because they happened to live closer to us, or in places which Providence had favoured with greater abundance? How he then directed their attention to the lamentable state of our home industries, producing a very telling set of statistics about the marketing of sanitary earthenware, which is, as all the world knows, extensively manufactured at Hoggstock. How, finally, he turned to agriculture in England; and how dexterously he contrived to give his hearers the impression that, if the present administration continued to enjoy the confidence of their fellow-citizens, the position of agriculture

would be vastly improved, without letting one word slip in the presence of the reporter from the *Barchester Sentinel* as to the means by which that improvement was going to take place. The reader must excuse us, if a Muse so pedestrian as ours shrinks from such an office altogether.

Our business is more particularly concerned with a time shortly after the Member for Crewe Junction had reached, at last, his magnificent peroration; and with a certain walk in the grounds which was conveniently retired from the general view. Here was a seat under a big yew tree—a tree that had gained in years but not lost in vigour since Frank Gresham tried to make love to Mary Thorne under it, fifty years before. Hither, during a lull in the proceedings, Major Gresham decoyed Miss Lookaloft—or, if you prefer the account which was given of the affair over the Barchester teatable, hither Miss Lookaloft decoyed Major Gresham. For myself, I do not see how the Barchester account can possibly be substantiated; for nothing could have been more non-committal than Miss Lookaloft's conversation at the time. True, she told Major Gresham she must have looked a perfect fright when she got up on to the platform, but it was open for Major Gresham to have agreed with her. True, she asked Major Gresham whether he didn't think loneliness was the worst possible fate that could befall a human being, and admitted to feeling lonely herself; but then, it was open to Major Gresham to have suggested that, in that case, they might as well rejoin the rest of the

party. And if she did become somewhat lyrical over the charms of Greshamsbury, and the good fortune of anybody who was privileged to regard such a property as his or her home, she was not saying much more than others had said before her. It was not necessary, surely, for Major Gresham to have taken his cue in the character of the Lord of Burleigh, and swept his hand round the lawns and the park across the road and even the village church (visible at this point, you will remember, through a gap in the houses) with the encouraging assurance, "All of this is mine and thine."

That, however, is what Major Gresham (metaphorically at least) did do; for he was still smarting under the criticisms which his sister had let fall on the day previous, and inclined, therefore, to view the charms of Miss Lookaloft through the haze of his own righteous indignation. As they walked back to the house together, they agreed to keep their engagement quiet for the moment (I see I have forgotten to tell the reader that Miss Lookaloft showed herself favourable to the amorous gentleman's suit); the company, they decided, had had enough of excitement for one afternoon. But in truth, so far as Major Gresham was concerned, the excitements of the afternoon were not yet over. For the Member for Crewe Junction took him aside just before he left, and, with sundry mysterious winks and nods, and adjurations not to let the matter go any further, broke the news to him that his Majesty's Government intended to offer its resignation

before Christmas, thereby leaving his Majesty's Opposition in the unenviable position of having to control the destinies of the nation without a Parliamentary majority at their back.

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Well it was for Major Gresham that his choice had fallen upon one who could be a helpmeet to him in a position such as that in which he now found himself; one who was qualified, if the phrase may be used without indelicacy, to be the nursing-mother of a Parliamentary constituency. The time had not yet come, to be sure, at which the gods, sore beset in their battle against the giants, called in Penthesilea with her Amazons to help them; when ladies actually took their seats at Westminster, and helped to shape the national policy. It was uncommon, even, in those days, for ladies to mount the hustings and make speeches in favour of this or that Parliamentary candidate. But ladies did, even in those days, "rain influence" and sometimes "adjudge the prize" at our political tourneys; and many a hard-headed Barchester artisan, who had not been distinguished hitherto by any political sympathies in either direction, proved willing enough to submit to lectures on economic theory, when these were delivered by so charming a professor as Miss Diana Lookaloft. The news of the engagement, too, once it was announced, cast a halo of romance around Major Gresham's candidature; and the necessity of introducing his loyal constituents to



the young lady of his choice made a convenient excuse for him to visit them in season and out of season, although no dissolution of Parliament was as yet anticipated by the public at large.

Miss Lookaloft, then, proved a valuable lieutenant; and as the shadow of the election drew nearer, it became plain that such lieutenancy would be needed. The Government had been long in office, and, as is the way of such governments, had contrived to make itself unpopular with more than one section of the community. There was Dr. Rantaway, for example, the son of that Mrs. Rantaway, formerly Miss Gushing, who became an Independent Methodist when she heard the news of Parson Oriel's engagement to be married—he was refusing regularly to pay his rates, because under the new Education Act some part of them went to supporting the Church schools. So, once a quarter, Dr. Rantaway was distrainted upon, and his neighbours had to buy his furniture and give it back to him, which caused a deal of noise, for Dr. Rantaway was a great figure in Barchester. Mr. Bunce, I admit, cannot bear the very mention of his name; but then, Mr. Bunce is no friend to Independent Methodists.

The Education Act was bad enough; and then on the top of that, articles began to appear in the *Barchester Sentinel* shewing that the mines in South Africa were being worked by Chinese coolies, who were brought over in shiploads and had to live in compounds, like slaves; and for this, too, his Majesty's Government was held responsible. So

the giants, now more confident of success than ever, piled the Ossa of Chinese Labour on the Pelion of the Education Act; and on both, more mountainous than either, the Olympus of Tariff Reform. And poor Major Gresham, who had hitherto looked upon a seat in Parliament as a kind of genteel accomplishment like his fathers before him, now found that with poring over blue-books, and addressing meetings, and receiving deputations, and answering angry letters, it took a man's time—and, for the matter of that, a woman's time also. He was not indisposed, therefore, to have a woman by his side in the conflict which lay before him.

Nevertheless, it must be admitted that he was sometimes tempted to wonder whether he had not been precipitate, on that afternoon at Greshamsbury, in laying his heart at her feet. Miss Lookaloft had a way of hurrying him through the lanes of Greshamsbury in her motor-car, at the rate of some thirty miles to the hour, which made him feel, somehow, as if he were her captive, and were being displayed to the population of Barsetshire as such. Nor, in her treatment of her former admirers, who were numerous, did she display that restraint which a gentleman of Major Gresham's upbringing would have thought suitable in a young lady already betrothed. Her manners, too, lacked something of that repose which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere; and when she referred to a political opponent as a "putrid old bounder," or designated some faulty piece of electioneering tactics as a "priceless floater,"

he could not always repress a shudder. Our hero was very much a man of honour; and it would never have occurred to him for an instant to extricate himself from what his friends plainly regarded as an entanglement. But he did wish that his inamorata would shew a more maidenly reserve, and make some attempt to consult his feelings.

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Meanwhile, there was a battle to be fought, and very manfully did Major Gresham bear himself in the fighting of it. Political necessity, he found, made him strange bed-fellows. On one platform, he would be standing shoulder to shoulder with Bishop Grantley, who managed to enunciate such phrases as "cynical spoliation" and "barefaced robbery" with an unctuousity of manner which made them sound like a benediction. On another, he would be cheek by jowl with Mr. Reddypalm, the local representative of the Licensed Victuallers' Association, equally convinced that sacrilegious hands were about to be laid upon other cherished rights of the people. His opponent, Mr. Bigloaf, was not in himself a very formidable rival, being a prosperous tradesman of Hoggstock. But the de Courcys, for all they lived in the other division of the county, and for all they were related to the Greshams, were openly supporting the Free Trade candidate, and were to lend him their two motor cars to take electors to the poll. For whereas you insult the manhood of the British elector by paying the price

of his glass of beer, you may give him a free ride, at much more considerable cost, from one end of the county to the other, and no harm is done. In those days, motor-rides were a rare treat, and the candidate who could press most cars into his service had a ready way of courting popularity.

With a view, therefore, of familiarizing himself with the lanes of East Barsetshire, the first chauffeur at Courcy Castle had orders, just a fortnight before polling-day, to betake himself to Silverbridge, and receive a practical lesson in geography from Mr. Bigloaf's agent. His submission is that, having those orders, he did with all reasonable precaution emerge from the Castle drive on to the Uffley-Greshamsbury road, sounding his horn not less than three times, and carefully reducing his speed to about ten miles an hour. That, on coming out into the road, he was intending to keep to the left-hand side. But on finding a large car proceeding in the opposite direction, towards Uffley, and driving quite illegally on the right-hand, that is to say the west side of the same road, he was forced to take the right-hand side of the road himself, and narrowly escaped running into the further wall.

It seems quite impossible to harmonize this account with that given by the chauffeur of the other car, which was Miss Lookaloft's. His statement is, that he was proceeding at a very reasonable pace along the road from Greshamsbury to Uffley, having orders to drive his mistress to Uffley railway-station, where they were to meet an important speaker

coming up from the west by the eleven o'clock train. That, just as they reached the Castle gates, a motor-car came out from the drive at high speed, turning to the left (that is, the north) and sweeping right across the road in front of his, Miss Lookaloft's chauffeur's, bonnet. For which reason he was forced to take the right-hand side of the road himself, with a sudden swerve; but that, in the frosty state of the roads, he lost control of the steering-wheel, so that his car climbed right up on to the bank at the right-hand (or west) side of the road, nearly overturned, and did actually deposit his mistress in the ditch.

We are not concerned, however, with the subsequent fortune of these two mechanics, each of whom had to find fresh employment. The fact which concerns us is that Miss Diana Lookaloft was shot out of her car into the ditch, and that, as she fell, her pretty head came in contact with a milestone then and there provided by the Barsetshire County Council to mark the distance (to wit, twelve miles) from Silverbridge. She lay there stunned, and, for all the men knew, worse; there was no hospital nearer than Silverbridge, or Barchester (which was as far in another direction). They acted, therefore, only with common human prudence when they agreed that the Courcy car, which was uninjured, should take Miss Lookaloft up to the Castle, and there she lay unconscious until such time as Dr. Killgerm could be fetched from Barchester to attend to her injuries.

Dr. Killgerm's report was, on the whole, favourable. The lady was suffering, he said, from concussion of the brain; she must lie quite still where she was for the present, and was to see no visitors; on the other hand, youth and health were on her side, and with proper medical attention (that is, with the attention of Dr. Killgerm) she was in a fair way to recover. Thus the official report, but you may well believe that the rumours which went round the county were far more sensational. The young lady lay, it was said, at death's door; and if by some miracle she survived, it was doubtful whether she would recover the use of her intellect. The lesson of it all was, that these motor-cars were nasty, dangerous things, and ought not to be allowed on the roads at all. But there were some who took a more sinister view of the whole affair; who hinted, without actually caring to say it, that Lady de Courcy's chauffeur had gone out with orders to run into Miss Lookalof's car, and thus deprive the Conservative candidate of his most useful supporter, on the very eve of the election. Impressions like these are not put into words, but they do somehow get round; and Mr. Millgrist, the Conservative agent, reckoned that the incident was as good as a turnover of two thousand votes.

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Such, however, were not the feelings of Major Gresham, who had to fight his election in a most unenviable state of mind. On the one hand, his

growing doubts, whether Miss Lookaloft were suited to be the mistress of Greshamsbury, could not but be increased when he heard that the young lady's features had tried conclusions with a granite mile-stone, and that, whatever became of her features, her intellect was not likely to survive the shock unimpaired. On the other hand, these injuries had been sustained out of devotion to his own cause, and it behoved him, accordingly, to be more loyal to his lady-love than ever. Visits to the sick-room were denied him; he plunged, therefore, into last-moment efforts to persuade the electors of East Barsetshire that, although their food might cost them more, it was their duty to return him at the head of the poll. The electors, now deprived of their hopes of a motor-ride—for Miss Lookaloft's car was under-going repairs, and the Courcyites had enough delicacy, after what had happened, to hold off from the conflict—were apathetic on the whole, and inclined to be suspicious of fair promises.

Then the results began to come in from other parts of England—for polling-day at Silverbridge was late on the list. And then, indeed, it did begin to appear that the gods were being hurled from their thrones, and that the superimposition of Olympus on Ossa and Pelion was to be a trusty scaling-ladder in the hands of the giants. Alas for poor Major Gresham! When all is said and done, nothing succeeds with an English electorate like success; nothing fails like failure. He lost his seat by less than a hundred votes; and was left with the bitter reflection that, if

Venus and her car had not been beaten off from the struggle by the Diomede of Courcy Castle, a handful of outlying voters might have turned the issue of the day. Major Gresham, however, lost his seat; and Mr. Bigloaf was summoned by His Majesty to attend, as one of his loyal burgesses, at Westminster; where (if my information be correct) he never opened his mouth, but derived considerable gratification from entertaining his friends to tea on the terraces.

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Arthur Gresham was a conscientious man, and, after the fashion of such, he always held it to be his own fault if any business he had in hand failed to prosper. It is doubtful whether, in fact, any candidate would have got so large a poll for East Barset in that particular election. But no sooner had he had time to digest the first bitterness of his defeat, than he began to accuse himself of injuring the cause of his party by representing it so unworthily. Especially—for he was a convinced Churchman—he was disturbed by the jubilations of Dr. Rantaway, and by the prophecies of vengeance stored up against the Established Church when the new Government should once be properly in the saddle. A few days, therefore, after the election he rode over to Barchester with the express purpose of seeing the Bishop, and of apologizing to him for not having served the cause of religion—for so he held it—better. I need hardly say that he was continuing his journey from Barchester to Courcy, where he hoped to find



admission to the sick-chamber of his innamorata. Here, too, if he found her well enough to receive him, it was his purpose to abase himself, as one who had not proved worthy of the labours she had dedicated in his behalf.

Just opposite the Brown Bear, as he came into the city, he encountered Mr. Reddypalm, the representative of the Licensed Victuallers, and reined up to receive that gentleman's condolences. Once more he felt that some apology was due from him; for had not Mr. Reddypalm eagerly espoused his cause; and would not Mr. Reddypalm's cause suffer, in its turn, from the Puritan spleen of the new legislators? He tried to say as much: "I'm afraid these are going to be bad times for the brewers, Mr. Reddypalm; there's been much talk at Westminster of reducing the number of licensed houses, and cutting down the hours during which an honest man may get his glass of beer; and now that the other fellows have come out top, I'm afraid we shall hear more of it."

Mr. Reddypalm treated him to an enormous wink. "Why, bless you, Major Gresham, sir, they can't do *us* any harm. Cut down the number of licensed houses? And why not? Here's the Brown Bear, which my father used to keep in his day; the magistrates might close that down any day, for it's a poky sort of place at the best of times. And what happens? D'you think the folk that drink of an evening at the Brown Bear will go to bed dry? No, Major Gresham, sir, they'll all go on up the street to the

White Horse, that's owned by the same firm, and the White Horse will find its custom doubled. Result—the same amount of beer sold, and the overhead expenses halved—that's all. Or say they close down the pubs at half after ten; people will still get their drinks, only they'll get through them quicker, and the barman will be off duty sooner, that's all. Result—the same amount of beer drunk, and the barman can be paid less for his time. No, sir, politics is one thing and real life is another; and whoever suffers, you'll find it ain't my friends, that's certain."

Made thoughtful by this interview, our hero went on his way to the Palace. It hardly needs saying that Dr. Grantley received him with his usual urbanity, and said a few appropriate things about disappointments and the spirit in which they should be borne, without the least appearance of preaching unseasonably. When Major Gresham went on to say that he regretted his ill-success, not so much from any personal ambition as because he feared he would not be able to fight the battle of the Church schools in the House of Commons, the good bishop slewed round a little in his chair, smoothed out a crease or two in his apron, and cocked his head at the fire. "Do you know, Major Gresham," he said, "I am touched, deeply touched, by this concern of yours. But don't, pray, let it weigh too much upon your mind; we must have faith, after all, mustn't we? Personally, I have no doubt at all that we have got to give up the schools sooner or later; with tithe

what it is, and the growing need for new churches, we shan't be able to keep up with the requirements of the Board—that seems to me quite certain. I have no doubt that we shall be able to smooth things over with the Government; facilities perhaps, perhaps rather less definiteness about the teaching—but it will all come right, depend upon it.”

Nobody ever came away from an interview with Dr. Grantley without being edified by his manner; but then, nobody ever came away from such an interview feeling much wiser as to what Dr. Grantley really thought. To Major Gresham it seemed as if, after all, the world was prepared to forgive him for having tried and failed; and it was with a lighter heart, accordingly, that he took the road to Courcy. Perhaps, since he was not destined to represent his division in Parliament, the occasional lapses in Miss Lookalof's speech and conduct would not be so very noticeable; and years, at the worst, would bring discretion. He had only seen her once or twice since her accident, the nurse assuring him that any prolonged interview would be prejudicial to her health; and indeed, her manner shewed some traces of fatigue. But now she was definitely past the turn, and he hoped that he might even find her downstairs, ready to laugh away his self-reproaches and comfort him for his misfortunes. Solitary travel is apt to turn us into daydreamers; and it was, it must be confessed, with very pleasurable anticipations that our hero clattered under the archway which led into the great court. He was the more disconcerted, when

a footman informed him that Miss Lookaloft had taken her departure that morning, under her doctor's orders. Sea-air had been recommended; and Lord Porlock (who was, as we know, the heir to the Courcy title), was himself escorting her to one of the southern watering-places. Major Gresham was just about to ask whether any of the family were at home, when another official of the household came forward and delivered him a letter, whose superscription was plainly in the young lady's rather scrawling hand. With a presentiment of its contents, he mounted his horse again, and read the missive as he went down the drive.

I do not propose to give the text of Miss Lookaloft's communication in detail. It is Mr. Bunce's opinion that Miss Lookaloft was a minx; and while I should hesitate, myself, to apply such a title to any young lady of great wealth, I cannot say that Miss Lookaloft was ever a heroine of mine. The phrases she used, about "having made a mistake, and discovered it in time," about temperaments being unsuited to one another, and the probability of some worthier object of attachment being found elsewhere, have been used by many young ladies before and since, in the same circumstances; and it is possible that Major Gresham did not greatly believe in them. What seemed clear to him was, that Miss Lookaloft had been of a mind to marry the Member of Parliament for East Barsetshire, and that, since Mr. Bigloaf was happily married, there was now a vacancy in her affections. A conclusion which was strengthened a

few months later, when he was invited to attend the wedding of Miss Diana Lookaloft to Lord Porlock.

As to what Miss Gresham said to Lady de Courcy about the affair, or Lady de Courcy to Miss Gresham, the curiosity of the reader must remain unsatisfied. It is our belief that they never met.

## IV

### MR. THEOPHYLACT CRAWLEY-GRANTLEY

It is but lately we have been assured that each of us is descended, not from two parents, but from four grand-parents. Our grand-parents, unfortunately, knew nothing of this; or doubtless they would have selected themselves better: as it is, we can only trust in the future of the race, when our own circum-spection shall have made itself felt among our grandchildren. It was a very haphazard principle of selection which mated, as the last of those old chronicles records, the son of Archdeacon Grantley to the daughter of Joshua Crawley. For, if ever there were two obstinate men in the world, these were they; if ever two men were a constant plague to their nearest and dearest, because they were incapable of seeing any point of view besides their own, or any problem beyond the immediate problem of the moment, Theophilus Grantley and Joshua Crawley are their proper designations. And if they had qualities in common which Nature could ill afford to reduplicate, so also they had individual failings which Nature was hard put to it to reconcile. Archdeacon Grantley was a lover of privilege, of his caste, of the existing order of things. Mr. Crawley (by

temperament, you may be sure, not only in virtue of his experience) was for ever crying out upon his wrongs. Mr. Crawley lived to make a martyr of himself, as surely as the Archdeacon lived to make martyrs of others. And it was into the blood of their grandson, Theophylact Crawley Grantley, that this effervescing mixture was infused.

I have written "Theophylact Crawley Grantley," for this was his full legal style, although the necessity of finishing off an examination paper, or of endorsing a cheque without straying over the margin, occasionally led him to abbreviate it. Joshua Crawley had but one son, Bobby, the same who was rescued by Lucy Roberts from the contagion of fever at Hoggstock; and he, who had so long withstood the hardships of that miserable life, did not, alas! long survive the change to more comfortable circumstances at St. Ewold's. It was then that Henry Grantley, who had married the eldest of the three daughters, altered his little son's name by deed poll, so that his maternal grandfather might take the greater pride, and find the greater comfort, in him. Joshua Crawley had learned, as we know, to do without comfort, but his pride remained to him; and it was pleasant to see him late in life, when the new coat that went with him to St. Ewold's was now an old one, nursing the little fellow awkwardly on his bony knees, and murmuring to himself "Crawley Grantley!" as if the invocation atoned, in some part, for what he had suffered and what he had lost.

Mr. Bunce, who was of course present at the christening, is my authority for saying that Theophylact kicked and screamed, upon that occasion, as a little pagan should. The ceremony took place in the Cathedral, and the two clerical grandfathers managed to parcel it out between them. It seemed as if the fact were symbolical of his whole destiny. And indeed, the two grandfathers would probably have managed to parcel out his education between them in the same way, had both lived. When he was at home at Cosby Lodge, little Theophylact was on neutral ground. But when he was taken to stay at Plumstead Episcopi, the good old Archdeacon would sigh for the day when it would be possible to mount him on his first pony, and marked him out to be a soldier, after his father's model. Whereas a visit to St. Ewold's held out the less alluring prospect of being given his first lessons in Latin. The Archdeacon was the less fortunate in his aspirations, for he died long before the pony could materialise. Then, in the epidemic which fell so severely on Barchester a few years later, Major Henry Grantley died too; Cosby Lodge was shut up, and the widow took her little son to live at St. Ewold's, with his remaining grandfather. Here he not only got (as might be expected) a solid grounding in Latin and Greek before ever he went to school, but (as perhaps might also be expected) a somewhat jaundiced view of life in general and of clerical life in particular—the echo of an old man's musings over long years spent in



bitter poverty and undeserved neglect. For Joshua Crawley, despite his new coat and his comfortable living at St. Ewold's, was never quite able to shake off the bitterness of spirit which had possessed him when he saw others, less earnest and less well qualified than himself, walk off with the prizes of the clerical calling, while he had been left so long to starve at Hoggstock.

Theophylact did not, as it proved, entertain any military ambitions. Indeed, from the first age at which boys indulge in daydreams about the future that lies in store for them, he had chosen the vocation of his two grandfathers. While his schoolfellows saw themselves discovering new continents, or making patriotic harangues at St. Stephen's, he was already, in his mind's eye, devoting himself to the needs of human souls, with perhaps some intermittent glimpse of a mitre as the reward of his imaginary labours. He had a brilliant career both at school and at college, so far as his books went; but neither at school nor at college did he acquire that habit of understanding and associating with his fellows which is assuredly not less essential to the sacred ministry. He always took his own path; defended, from some contrariety in his nature, the unpopular cause, and despised those who agreed with him. He was not unpopular; he was neither persecuted nor shunned by his equals; but his proud and lonely spirit chose isolation for itself, and found, in that condition, all the gratification of martyrdom. He

grew up into the kind of man who is all for setting the world straight, but less, you would think, from any love of the world as he would fain have it be, than from hatred of the world as he finds it. He raged against poverty, yet he never understood the poor; he was loud in defence of liberty, but he decried the use men made of what liberty they had; he preached peace, but in a manner so provocative that he only succeeded in fanning the flames of controversy. In a word, he was a man full of cold charity, and unattractive righteousness.

This character of his was, however, first developed in fields of work far removed from Bassetshire, at a period of his life which does not concern us. When Joshua Crawley died, his daughter Grace went back to live at Cosby Lodge; but her son had by that time a cure of souls in a different part of England. It would not have been difficult for the grandson of Archdeacon Grantley to obtain preferment in the Barchester diocese; but it would have been difficult for the grandson of Mr. Crawley to accept of it. It was not until he was already about forty years of age, and well known as a scholarly clergyman with a future in front of him, that he came back to the scenes of his early life. It was then that the Liberal Government, finding a vacancy in the Barchester chapter through the death of old Dr. Pentateuch, determined to fill it by the appointment of our friend Mr. Crawley Grantley. And if the Government in question was somewhat influenced by the

fact that Mr. Crawley Grantley was a man of considerable wealth, and connected with some of the great families in Barsetshire, you may be quite sure that they breathed no whisper of this to the man of their choice; and that he, for his part, looked upon the offer of preferment as a suitable recognition of his scholarship, having recently published a work on Family Life among the Essenes.

Yes, Mr. Crawley Grantley was already something of a personage in Barsetshire. His uncle Samuel, indeed, was no longer bishop, having been translated to another see several years before this. But the name of Grantley was still held in admiring remembrance; and there was still living, in a house near the close, an old lady who was herself connected with the Grantleys, and whose word still went for a good deal in Cathedral society. This was, of course, Mrs. Arabin, formerly Mrs. Bold, formerly Eleanor Harding, whose sister, Susan Harding, was Theophylact's grandmother. Mrs. Arabin, therefore, was related to him on his father's side; and on his mother's side, was he not a Crawley? And had not Dean Arabin and Mr. Crawley been close friends, first in the days of their obscurity, and then in happier times when both of them were basking in the world's favours? To be under the protection of Mrs. Arabin still meant much in Barchester; and then, it is to be remembered that Mr. Crawley Grantley was a landowner. Cosby Lodge was not, to be sure, a very large house, nor were the grounds adjoining it extensive, but it

carried a kind of brevet squiredom with it; for hat-touching and card-dropping purposes, the owner of Cosby Lodge ranked as a squire. Even better than that—for already in those days the landed gentry were beginning to feel the pinch of the times—Mr. Crawley-Grantley was rich. Most of what the Archdeacon left—and that was no trifle—had descended to him; and the investments made with it had been fortunate. Of course, he was not rich as the de Courcys of Courcy Castle were in these days, or the Guggenheims of Mill Hill; but he was certainly the most opulent clergyman in Barsetshire.

If anything, Cosby Lodge was something of an embarrassment. For, his mother dying about this time, and his sisters and half-sister being well provided for in other ways, the house and property reverted to Mr. Crawley-Grantley himself, who was already very comfortably off with his prebend in the city of Barchester. For a time, he talked of using Cosby Lodge for some charitable purpose; of making it, for example, into a home of rest for over-worked or outworn clergy. It was, I think, Mr. Topnotch of St. Gregory's who observed that the over-worked and outworn clergy would find very little rest there if their benefactor continued to reside in it himself—but this was afterwards, when his vigorous preaching had begun to make something of a stir in Barchester. For the time being, at any rate, Cosby Lodge acted as a kind of *ville giatura* for our friend, whither he could retire when

the atmosphere of strain and gossip in Barchester itself was too much for him. Customarily, it was in Barchester that he was to be found; occupying, indeed, the very house which had once belonged to Dr. Vesey Stanhope, and is consecrated to readers of those older chronicles by memories of Charlotte, and Ethelbert, and the signora.

It was, then, no common event when Theophylact Crawley Grantley climbed into the Cathedral pulpit for the first time, to dispense the word of God according to the course of his ministration. I will not say that all Barchester was there; for I am sorry to say that in these days, if all Barchester went to church on any given Sunday, only about a quarter of it would be able to get in, even if you include the dissenting chapels, and the little church of St. Philomena down by the station. But all the ecclesiastical world of Barchester was there; and, as Mrs. Green said to Mrs. Grey, "I think we may regard ourselves, without boastfulness, as a kind of microcosm." It was Mr. Bunce himself, with his mace decorously balanced over his shoulder, as if ready to be brought down on the head of any rash intruder who should venture to dispute with the Canon in residence the right of occupying the pulpit, who unfastened the little oak door at the foot of the steps, and directed the new prebendary's attention to the whereabouts of the concealed electric-light switch. There was a subdued coughing, as folks prepared to deny themselves that luxury, if it could be managed, for the next half-hour; and

then a complete hush, except for a slight rustling from one of the front pews, where Mrs. Arabin was making sure from her own Bible that the chapter and verse of the text had been accurately given, as she had done any time these seventy years past.

In point of fact, Mrs. Arabin's precautions were unnecessary, since her great-nephew took his text from the First Lesson. The First Lesson for that morning had described the fall of Jericho, when the children of Israel marched round the walls, with trumpets and shouting; and it had been admirably read by one of the minor canons, Mr. Suckingdove, whose sudden lifting of the voice at the words "the wall fell down *flat*" commanded universal admiration and had, before now, woken up dozing trebles. It was many years since Barchester had heard an Old Testament sermon, in the manner of last century; and the older people present, Mrs. Arabin among them, listened eagerly to hear what the new canon would make of his text. He began by explaining that he had, personally, investigated the site of Jericho a year or two back, and had found no trace of any city which could be contemporary with the date of Joshua, nor of any walls which could possibly be supposed to have fallen down suddenly, after the manner alleged by Scripture. This was, he said, only a single instance out of a number of instances equally cogent, which shewed that the supposedly historical books of the Bible were not historical at all, and were written so long after the events they described that no kind of reliance

could be placed in their statements. Moses, if he ever existed, must have existed at a date when nobody ever put pen to paper. Then the preacher turned aside to various incidents in the Old Testament story which were, he said, revolting to all our modern sense of morality. His conclusion was, that the Old Testament was a work which could not be safely left in the hands of young persons, and that the indiscriminate reading of it during divine service was an insult to the dignity of a sacred edifice. The most he could be induced to say in its favour was, that several passages in the Authorised Version contained pieces of excellent English prose-writing. With which rather meagre concession, he descended from the pulpit, having occupied nearly three-quarters of an hour without making any allusion to Christianity.

I should like to be able to say that this pronouncement set all Barchester by the ears. Possibly the preacher had meant it to have that effect; for he persisted in treating his congregation as if they were personally responsible for maintaining the lectionary of the Established Church in its existing condition; nor did he fail to insinuate that he thought very poorly of the intelligence shewn by the honest tradespeople of Barchester, in sitting there Sunday after Sunday and drinking in, without protest, this mass of misleading information. And certainly one or two of the older persons present were shocked; Mr. Bunce himself was shocked, though more at the suggestion that there

could possibly be anything wrong with the Cathedral services, than at the reflexions cast on the authenticity of Scripture. But it is doubtful whether anybody under sixty had ever thought about the Book of Joshua except as a lesson which he had to learn at school; and an attack by the higher critics on the walls of Jericho was a thing they were perfectly prepared to take lying down. If the truth must be told, the only complaint made by the younger members of his audience was that the new prebendary's sermon was uncommonly long and rather dull. For Mr. Crawley-Grantley had neither style nor eloquence; he lectured his hearers, and depended on the unconventionality of his matter to keep them awake.

It so chanced, however, that the *Barchester Sentinel* had its representative at the service; and this gentleman, a Mr. Molehill, was wont to eke out his meagre salary by acting as "our special correspondent" to some of the London newspapers. None knew better than Mr. Molehill that editors had some difficulty in finding enough sensational matter to fill their columns on a Monday morning, unless any earthquake or collision at sea had been accommodating enough to take place on the Day of Rest. Not content, therefore, with sending a full, though illiterate, account of the sermon to his own newspaper, Mr. Molehill spent the latter part of Sunday afternoon in communicating with the editor of the *Daily Excess* by means of the electric telegraph; and this account con-



sisted only of some dozen phrases, violently torn out of their context, which had struck the practised ear of Mr. Molehill as gratifyingly heretical. Nor did the editor in London fail to play his part, heading his column with the words "Barchester Bombshell" in very large type, and describing Mr. Crawley Grantley's sermon as a fearless or courageous utterance throughout. Had the readers of the *Daily Excess* been given to estimating the exact value of words, it would have been difficult for them to ascertain what precise dangers Mr. Crawley Grantley had braved in expressing these sentiments. It was hardly to be expected that the walls of Barchester Cathedral should fall upon him in punishment for his unorthodoxy, or that my friend Mr. Bunce, in his zeal for the traditional lectionary, should bring that silver-headed mace down on the blasphemer's head. Still more improbable was it that any man, woman or child in the Established Church would arraign Mr. Crawley Grantley for heresy, or touch a hair of his head by so doing. The only fear which the reverend gentleman might legitimately have felt in preaching his sermon, was the fear of what the *Daily Excess* would make of it.

Oh, my friends, who write for the newspapers—is it really well done, to make copy for the breakfast-table out of subjects which to some, at least, of your readers are necessarily sacred? To make that which, if it has a meaning at all, has a meaning for all eternity, the theme of a nine days' wonder?

If a scholarly man dilates, for three-quarters of an hour, upon certain recondite problems, is it fair to represent his meaning by quoting a dozen catch phrases? Oh my friends, have you no eyes for any feature of religion, except what will provoke controversy and shock the tender conscience? Is there no other message, of spiritual comfort and of old-fashioned piety, to be derived from our Sunday pulpits, that you would be better advised to disseminate, even though you cannot describe it as a bombshell, or compliment the preacher on his audacity?

Beyond doubt, the *Daily Excess* was wise in its generation. A controversy followed, and for a week the personality, or alleged personality of Joshua was as familiar to the reading public as if he had been a lightweight champion. Several theologians, on the road to eminence, were induced to "make statements" to interviewers; and the authenticity of the Old Testament was further discussed in a multitude of letters from private correspondents who were very ill qualified to pronounce upon it. And, naturally enough, the repercussions of this controversy were nowhere heard so loud as in Barchester. A large number of persons who had been too busy taking their sweethearts out on motor-bicycles, or gambling in the open air on meadows beside the river, to hear what Mr. Crawley-Grantley said, were filled with excitement over what he was said to have said. He became, all at once, a familiar figure in Barchester; his

shambling walk, his truculent look, his old-fashioned white tie (for by this time even the Low Church clergy of Barchester had adopted that collar which Dr. Catacomb, fifty years before, had derided as "Roman"); as well as the straw boater—white, none of your speckled compromises—which proclaimed his repudiation of clericalism. For it was an axiom with Mr. Crawley Grantley, that the clergy should not seek to distinguish themselves from the laity by any peculiarities of appearance; although, as often happens in the case of such men, Providence had endowed him with so unmistakably clerical a face as had earned him the nickname of "Sky-pilot" when he was still running about in cut-shorts and a woollen jersey at school.

Yes, the unecclesiastical world of Barchester began to take notice of Mr. Crawley Grantley; and the effect, I am sorry to say, was to turn his head a little. Shop-girls wrote to consult him about their love-affairs; lunatics pestered him with new interpretations of the Apocalypse; professional enquirers after religious truth, if the unkind phrase may be used of them, sent him nine-page questionnaires, and expected answers in detail. He began to feel something of a personage; and meanwhile, the *Daily Excess* was constantly asking his opinion, not only on matters which may be supposed to have fallen within his province, but on topics of general interest, such as the desirability of female suffrage, or the prospects of Cambridge in the

Boat Race. An unacknowledged voice whispered in his bosom, that he would do well to keep himself in the limelight; an instinct of prudence warned him that, if he was to enjoy newspaper publicity, he must do the same sort of thing over again. Otherwise, I do not think it would have entered his head to preach his famous sermon about the Resurrection, which was printed in full by one of the London dailies, that had already gone to press when he preached it.

I do not propose to give any account of this sermon; for, in spite of the printed version so appearing, there seems to be considerable doubt as to what Mr. Crawley-Grantley said in the pulpit, or, if he did say it, what he meant by it. But, although what he actually asserted had doubtless been asserted by others, and received without comment, there can be little doubt that our friend's utterance was deliberately provocative. It was his instinct to make himself unpopular; and the discovery that in doing so he at the same time made himself popular did not act as a corrective. Mr. Crawley-Grantley wanted to be a martyr; and what is the use of being a martyr, if there are no plaudits from the crowd to help you face the flames? Certain, as only Archdeacon Grantley's grandson could be certain, that he was in the right, he delighted, as only Mr. Crawley's grandson could have delighted, in the consciousness that his clerical brethren disagreed with him. And he told himself, meanwhile, that he was bringing about a revival

of religion in Barchester; for had not his sermon (duly advertised beforehand) brought to the Cathedral a whole crowd of listeners—listeners, perhaps, rather than worshippers—who were not seen within those walls above once in a twelve-month? So Mr. Crawley Grantley rejoiced; and only a summons to Lambeth to answer a charge of heresy was needed to fill his cup of happiness to the brim.

But alas! heresy trials are rare nowadays, and cannot be had for the asking. Public attention was distracted by scandals elsewhere; and, in the Cathedral close itself, our popular-unpopular hero did not lack his defenders. It is a matter of common observation that persons, especially ladies, of a romantic disposition will always spring to the defence of anybody whom they hear publicly attacked. For a sample of what Barchester was saying about the new prebendary, let us listen to a conversation between old Mrs. Arabin and two visitors of hers, shortly after the famous sermon. One of the visitors, whom we have met already, was Miss Maud Gresham, still unmarried and now living at Boxall Hill, no great distance from the city. The other was a widow lady living near the close, Mrs. Friedenzeit, who would be more familiar to us under her maiden name of Robarts. She was the daughter of that Mark Robarts who had once held a prebendal stall, and had died as Bishop of Papua. She was now close upon fifty years of age, although her glowing cheeks and her still ungrizzled hair did not proclaim it. Her husband had been a

London merchant, of German extraction, who had died, without children, not long before.

"I am surprised," Miss Gresham was exclaiming, "that the Bishop has said nothing about it." But the Bishop of those days, who had succeeded Dr. Samuel Grantley, was Dr. Duggin; and he never did say anything about anything if he could possibly help it. Nor should we blame him; for indeed it was his gift of silence that had raised Dr. Duggin to a bishopric.

"It would be a very grave step, my dear," Mrs. Arabin pointed out. "The Bishop was not there, you know, when the sermon was preached; and it seems very doubtful whether it was accurately reported. I confess it distressed me, but then, I daresay I am growing old-fashioned. The Dean, I know, said he could find no harm in it."

"The Dean wasn't listening, I imagine," retorted Miss Gresham; "I believe he never thinks of anything except heating apparatus and fire insurances, even at service time. Mrs. Awmbry, I know, was so disgusted that she would have walked out there and then if Dr. Motherwell, who was next her, had not been asleep, with his legs stretched right across the gangway. She says the whole thing was a deliberate insult to the chapter."

"I wonder," observed Mrs. Friedenzeit, "why we always take things so personally here? I should have thought that if Mr. Crawley Grantley did really preach heresy, it would have been an insult to the whole of Christendom, not simply to the

dean and canons of Barchester. Don't you think, perhaps, that he felt it his duty to say what he did?"

"Surely, Justinia," urged Mrs. Arabin, "none of us can have a duty to upset our neighbour's convictions, even if we think he is in the wrong, from a public pulpit?" And she sighed a little; perhaps going back in memory over the years to that day when she defended Mr. Slope's orthodoxy, and her father replied in much the same terms.

"I don't see what you mean by calling it his duty, anyway," snapped the more determined Miss Gresham. "What Arthur says is, when he sits on the bench, he sits there to administer the law of the country; if he disagreed with the law of the country, it would be his duty to resign, and he would resign. Well, isn't Mr. Crawley Grantley in the same position, if he doesn't see eye to eye with the Church of England about the Resurrection? He can resign his prebend, and we should think none the worse of him. What we can't understand is how he goes on taking his stipend as a clergyman, and preaching doctrines which he knows to be unorthodox."

"He has subscribed far more to the Cathedral Fabric Fund than he ever drew from his prebend," objected Mrs. Friedenzeit, concentrating, woman-like, on the personal accusation.

"Oh, I daresay; we all know he is well off. But you can't deny that he owes his position in Barchester to being a prebendary; and he uses that

position to teach heresy, that's what it comes to. How you, Justinia, with a decent Christian upbringing——"

"Never mind how I've been upbrought," said Mrs. Friedenzeit angrily. "You don't seem to realize that there may be a far purer form of Christianity than you people have ever dreamed of, and Mr. Crawley Grantley may be preaching it." She coloured a little as she said this; for it was well known that when her husband died she had almost fallen into the errors of Spiritualism, and might, but for Mrs. Arabin's influence, have surrendered to them altogether. "Anyhow," she added, "Mr. Crawley Grantley does read his Bible; and if you'd come to his New Testament lectures in the crypt on Wednesday evenings, you'd see that he really does try to think things out."

"You seem to forget, I don't live in Barchester," replied Miss Gresham with dignity. "And if I did, I'd have better things to do than go and sit at the feet of a disagreeable pedant like that, who tries to advertise himself at the expense of the Church. What his grandfather, the Archdeacon, would have said——"

"Just what you're saying, my dear," interrupted Mrs. Arabin, "only rather more of it. Come now, let's talk about something else; there's no use in getting up a quarrel about it."

Mrs. Friedenzeit, however, did go to Mr. Crawley Grantley's lectures in the crypt; nor was she by any means alone in so doing; for the name which



the lecturer now enjoyed was sufficient to attract a good few of the intelligent or would-be intelligent citizens. He must have had, when he began, an audience of at least fifty; but, to tell the truth, he did not go about the right way to keep it. He stuck very close to the Greek, did Mr. Crawley Grantley; and he discussed every verse in great detail, so that he did not manage to deliver himself of a heretical sentiment above once in three lectures. This was not what people came to hear, and the attendance dropped off more and more as the winter advanced, till at last it began to resemble the congregations at those early morning services which Caleb Oriel used to hold, when he first came to Greshamsbury. At last, one winter evening of sleet and cold, the lecturer found himself face to face with a single auditor; or perhaps I should say auditress, for it was none other than Mrs. Friedenzeit. He delivered his lecture nevertheless, as if the crypt had been crowded to hear him; and she sat there with perfect gravity, taking notes of what he said, for she was a prebendary's daughter. It was a mark of unusual condescension when Mr. Crawley Grantley volunteered to see her home, lending her the shelter of his umbrella, for she had come straight from the Deanery without one.

"I fear I shall have to give up the lectures," he said. "They don't seem to have caught on, somehow. I believe I never had the arts of popularity, so perhaps I am not the right man to do it."

"Oh, but you are the right man," the widow assured him. "You have great powers of sympathy, you know, if you would only condescend to use them, instead of staying up in the clouds all the time. I believe you will have great influence, if you will only give play to your heart as well as to your head."

"My heart?" asked the reverend gentleman in a puzzled voice, as if this was the last thing that could have anything to do with it.

"What I mean is," said the lady, in some confusion, "I think you devote yourself too much to scholarship, to the cultivation of the mind; you forget that we have souls, and—well, difficulties, Mr. Crawley, Grantley, which need the help of a sympathetic adviser if we are to overcome them. I don't mean intellectual difficulties, I mean practical ones—loneliness, for example," she added, with a tremor in her voice.

It appeared to Mr. Crawley, Grantley as if he were being invited to act as father-confessor to all the pious ladies of Barchester; which would have been a very considerable task, even if he had felt that he possessed the necessary qualifications for it. "Each man has his own job, I suppose," he said, "and mine seems to be grubbing in lexicons. Yes, I know what loneliness is; but then, perhaps that's a sacrifice we are called on to make."

"Do you think so?" she asked. "In your heart of hearts? Would you not be the better, the

more useful, even for your own work, if you had more human sympathy?"

"It is too late to change much," he replied, "at my time of life. I am forty-three, you know. Perhaps if I had married——"

"You never thought of marrying?"

"Once; but circumstances prevented it."

"Then, you see, you need friendship all the more. You condemn yourself to a life of struggle; you should not live one of solitude too. You *need* sympathy: of that I am certain."

"That means, that I have yours?"

"All the sympathy I am capable of, if you ask for it."

"If I ask for it? Can one ask for it, without losing self-respect? I will be honest with you, Mrs. Friedenzeit. I cannot beg for so much, without begging for more. I would be the happiest man in the world if you, who have stood by me so all this time, would take me for your husband."

"Theophylact!" murmured the lady; which he took, rightly, to be a compliance with his request.

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Weddings were always popular in Barchester, especially clerical weddings; nor was this an exception, for all the black looks the bridegroom had won for himself in certain quarters by his theological views. Mrs. Arabin hit off the general opinion when she said, "It's exactly what he wants, a good,

sensible woman like Justinia to keep him from making a fool of himself." The ceremony was performed, of course, in the Cathedral, nor did the bridegroom make any protest against the allusion to figures such as those of Abraham and Sarah, which he presumably regarded as mythical. And it seemed, it must be confessed, as if either the influence of matrimony or the influence of his wife was having a sobering effect upon him. During the early months of the year nineteen hundred and fourteen, when ecclesiastical controversy was rife all over England, Mr. Crawley, Grantley remained quiet. And if it is true that, when his turn came to invite an outside preacher during that period, he had arranged to send Dr. Rantaway into the pulpit—an arrangement which now seems ordinary enough, but at that time would have created a very difficult situation for the chapter—it is certain, on Mr. Bunce's admission, that nothing ever came of the plan; and it is only fair to attribute his change of mind to the woman who had been given him as a helpmate.

But in the early summer of that year Mr. Crawley, Grantley, to use Mr. Bunce's irreverent phrase, "broke loose again." It so happened that a certain farmer at Stoke Pinguin, much impoverished by recent failure of crops, refused to pay his tithe; an incident common enough now, but then a considerable novelty. What drew attention to it most unfortunately was the fact that, just then, a scheme had been set on foot for the division of the

Barchester diocese, subject to the passing of a Bill for that purpose. And, although the greater part of the money had already been subscribed by a benefactor, who was generally known to be Mr. Crawley Grantley himself; though it was an understood thing that Cosby Lodge was to be the residence of the new bishop, who would take his title from Silverbridge; nevertheless there were still funds to be raised by an appeal to the public generosity, and it was not the right moment for the Church to appear in the light of a grasping creditor. So that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners would have been well advised to waive their claim, in this instance, if they had felt justified in doing so, and allowed Farmer Grumblecrop to continue in possession of his cows and pigs, instead of having them sold up, bought by indignant neighbours, and so restored to him. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners, however, as men appointed to execute a trust, did very naturally press for payment; the cattle were sold up, bought, and returned to Mr. Grumblecrop; and you may easily believe that the Radical newspapers made the most of it, more especially as the agitation for the disestablishment of the Church in Wales was then at the height of its momentum.

It was at this point that Mr. Crawley Grantley came back into the arena, all thirsting for the joy of battle, like Achilles after the death of Patroclus. And, by force of habit, he used the pulpit of Barchester Cathedral to deliver his manifesto. Whether

his wife was privy to it, we have no means of knowing, but the fact remains that Mr. Crawley Grantley, preaching before all the ecclesiastical *élite* of Barchester, as well as a good crowd of his own following, did preach a sermon in which he proposed nothing less than the total abolition of tithe. It was nonsense, he held, to urge that the tithe was a recognised claim on the land, and that those who paid it had entered into a free contract to pay it. The fact was that it dated from a time when the whole of England was united in a single creed, and when the slavish superstitions of the medieval Church countenanced a system of compulsory levies on layfolk for the upkeep of religion. Tithe, then, should be abolished altogether, and a system of voluntary contributions instituted, by which the farmers would be asked to support their pastors in return for the benefit of their ministrations. "Which would have the further advantage," pursued the preacher, glaring angrily round through his spectacles, "of ensuring that those ministrations were properly undertaken, under pain of a diminished income." With which Parthian shot he left the pulpit, having at last fairly delivered a bombshell in the Cathedral precincts.

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"It would never do, never," said poor old Dean Plumblin, shaking his head over the audacious proposition made in yesterday's sermon. The chapter were assembled for I know not what matter of

high debate; and Mr. Crawley Grantley was fortunately, perhaps considerably, absent.

"Do? I should think it would not do," replied Archdeacon Whatnext, banging his fist on the table in a manner reminiscent of an earlier archidiaconate. "The fact is, we've all seen it coming for some time, Crawley Grantley is wrong in his head. I don't mean just wrong-headed; I mean he's touched, mentally; no use trying to shut our eyes to the situation. He must be asked to retire, or made to retire; his prebend's not big enough to hold him."

"Perhaps it won't need to be," suggested a meagre prebendary—there was still a meagre prebendary at Barchester. "I hear he's quite certain to be made Bishop of Silverbridge, if the division of the diocese goes through." For this meagre prebendary, like his predecessor, took a kind of ghoulish delight in making the worst of a situation, even when he was as much disturbed by it as his colleagues.

"Then it must not go through," retorted the archdeacon. "God knows there's enough opposition to it as it is. Crawley Grantley a bishop! Why, he would be abolishing the House of Lords!"

"Better at Silverbridge than at Barchester," persisted the meagre prebendary, crossing one knee over the other and nursing it. "It can't be long, I'm afraid, before the Bishop sends in his resignation. How is his lordship, by the way, Mr.

Dean?" For Bishop Duggin was at that time in very feeble health.

"None too grand, I'm afraid," the Dean answered. "But surely the Government would never appoint one of ourselves? It's never done."

"I wouldn't set any limits to what the present Government might do. Say what you like, Crawley, Grantley has a big pull. He's preaching to royalty, I hear, next month."

"Can we do nothing?" asked the archdeacon, in despair.

"Not until the Bishop is fit to be consulted about it, at least," said the Dean. "And that may be weeks yet. Let us only hope that Crawley, Grantley will find something else to think about."

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And indeed, about a month later, not only the recalcitrant prebendary but all his reverend brethren, and all Barchester, and all England, had something else to think about. Much could be said about the changes which the War introduced into the life of Barchester; yet not much, which would not be equally true of any other town in England. But one difference the War made, which was very observable to all those who knew Barchester, and much regretted by those who loved it; most of all, perhaps, by my friend Mr. Bunce, whose life was so entirely identified with one part of it. The Cathedral, and the Cathedral precincts, no longer remained the sole and undisputed centre of the



town's interests, as they had been time out of mind. It was partly that, as the War went on, the great munition works at Hoggstock overflowed into Barchester, and brought with them a new population from outside, who had no roots in the place and no veneration for its history. Partly that the barracks, and the doings of soldiers, and the fame of soldiers, threw the clerical glories of the place into the shade. No effort was spared, you may be sure, to attract both soldiers and munition workers to the Cathedral by holding special services. But they were attended perfunctorily, and as a rule sparsely. When the great mission to the troops was held, not more than a hundred of the congregation were in uniform; and only a handful of these would join in saying the Lord's Prayer. The old, tattered banners of the Barsetshire Regiment still hung from the clerestory windows, but they bore testimony of a world that was dead.

I do not mean that the clergyman and the ladies of Barchester failed to make themselves useful. They visited hospitals, they organised concerts, they sent out comforts to the troops by the shipload, they did all the work that had been abandoned by men called to the colours, often without remuneration. Nor do I mean to suggest that Barchester felt itself to be in any way remote from the War, or failed to take an interest in its progress. On the contrary, the most intimate details of military

strategy were discussed in Barchester drawing-rooms, as if the ladies had never taken an interest in any other subject; and there was no morning on which you could not see Mrs. Grey and Mrs. Green altering the position of little flags on maps of the principal theatres of operations, in conformity with the rather grudging intelligence which the Ministry of Information allowed them on the subject. But for all that, Barchester as we knew it was dead; its pleasant bickerings, and scholarly enthusiasms, and delightful thrills of gossip; as if snow had fallen suddenly in the night, burying all traces and obliterating all distinctions under its white mantle.

Under this cloak of general amnesty, Mr. Crawley's Grantley, and his heresies, and his shameful utterance about the tithe, were forgotten. The Silverbridge Bishopric scheme, too, was laid aside for the time being, to which much of his activity had of late been devoted. Nor was it possible for him to keep in touch, as he had ever been wont to keep in touch, with the work of German theologians, whose writings were rigorously excluded from the country, as if they might be expected to sap our national powers of resistance. During the first months of the war, therefore, Mr. Crawley's Grantley went to and fro between the Cathedral and his lodgings with the air of a man whose occupation is gone. Some have thought it was from chafing against this enforced inaction—for he was, after all, the great archdeacon's grandson—that

he was inspired to make his last gesture. Others, Mr. Bunce among them, hold that he disapproved of the War altogether in his heart of hearts, and could no longer bottle up his feelings. For myself, I find it more charitable to assume that he felt deeply, as a Liberal, on one particular subject, and that his nagging, rather scrupulous conscience forbade him to keep silence.

Be that as it may, Mr. Crawley Grantley did, once again, stand in the pulpit of Barchester Cathedral and electrify his hearers. It was not an occasion upon which any such demonstration was to be expected; the Bishop, poor Dr. Duggin, was now far gone in his last illness, and his health was the chief topic of discussion in the Close. Nobody, therefore, except perhaps the faithful Mr. Molehill, was prepared for Mr. Crawley Grantley's sudden attack on compulsory military service, which system was then about to be introduced by his Majesty's Government, in conformity with the practice of our allies on the Continent of Europe. The preacher did not appeal to any popular prejudice; still less did he indicate any want of sympathy with the cause for which the country was fighting; to call the utterance "pro-German," as many people did afterwards, was quite unjustified. He simply took the ground that this was an invasion of the private liberties of the citizen; that it was bringing into being a quite new notion, so far as England was concerned, that of a State which can

dispose of the lives and fortunes of its subjects as it will, for some common good. It would not end there, said the preacher; once grant the principle that the State is omnipotent, and it will learn to filch from its citizens every liberty they possess. And much more, in the same fantastic vein; so academically phrased, that the meagre prebendary was probably right in saying it made Joshua seem quite a live issue by comparison.

Barchester, however, was not prepared at the time to make any such excuses. Mr. Bunce assures me that a crowd of worshippers gathered outside the main door after the service, with the intention of booing Mr. Crawley, Grantley, who, however, left by the vestry. "That's a nice sort of thing to happen," Mr. Bunce observed to me; and indeed I can think of nothing more disturbing to his great sense of decorum. But alas! Mr. Crawley, Grantley had only himself to thank for it. People who come to church to hear some new thing, not to pray, will behave like an election crowd if they are given the opportunity. And it was not so much, now, the ecclesiastical world of Barchester that rose in opposition, as the busybodies of the town in general. People suddenly remembered that Mrs. Crawley, Grantley had had a German name before her marriage; and they were too excited to remember that she derived that name from a previous husband who was long dead, that she had never crossed the frontiers of Germany, and that her own family,

the Robartses, were a West Country family of unimpeachably British origin. The rumour went round at once that Mrs. Crawley Grantley was a spy, and that a police investigation had found a quantity of explosive bombs concealed in her bedroom wardrobe. So loud did these complaints become, that the unfortunate gentleman had to take his wife off to Cosby Lodge, whither he was pursued by a great number of threatening letters and anonymous postcards. It was only the shortage of fuel, I am told, which prevented his being burned in effigy in the market-place.

Meanwhile, by means of the electric telephone, Mr. Molehill had been in communication with the *Daily Excess*. Poor Mr. Molehill!—it was not quite the scoop (as he would have called it) which he expected; for an inopportune advance of our forces in Mesopotamia had to be given the honours of the front page. Nevertheless, I am happy to say that Mr. Molehill's contribution was placed in a very prominent position, and that he was suitably rewarded for his pains. So that the name of Barchester became known all over the habitable globe, as being a hot-bed of ecclesiastical intrigue in favour of Germany. And, Dr. Duggin having succumbed to his illness a week later, it was not long before the public was informed that His Majesty had been pleased to appoint to the vacant see Dr. Herbert Goodenough, the capable Vicar of Slumport.

So Mr. Crawley Grantley did at last make a fearless utterance, and lost a bishopric by it. If he had not thereupon taken service as a military chaplain, and died of fever at Port Said, he would perhaps by now have come into his own.

## V

### THERE'S NO HOLDING THEM

It was not to be expected that Mr. Bunce should take kindly to the world as the War had left it. He is eighty; and to such men the years which the locust has eaten are not easily restored. He has spent all his life in a Cathedral town, and most of it in a Cathedral; and it is a matter of observation that a kind of spiritual lichen grows over such characters, scarcely to be wondered at. That times have changed in Barchester is a complaint come down, presumably from the days of John Hiram; certainly in the late 'sixties the Archdeacon and the precentor shook their heads over the old days when clergymen danced, or played whist at three-penny points; and they themselves, now, are distant memories of Mr. Bunce's youth. He exercises to the full, himself, this elderly privilege of head-shaking; and it were a pity to grudge it to him. Those who must soon leave the world are the happier for being convinced that it is a sorry place they are leaving.

All the same, I think Mr. Bunce is too much inclined, like most of us, to date all decadence from the Treaty of Versailles, and to forget that

the tendencies he deplores were long present among us, only not so noticeable. Of late, for example, he has had recourse to the help of physicians; and it is his fixed belief that the mantles of Dr. Fillgrave and Mr. Rerechild have descended indifferently, if at all, upon Dr. Killgerm, and Mr. Motherwell, who have succeeded them. "They don't understand their own drugs, sir, that's the long and short of it; send you round to the Cash Chemists' for a bottle of stuff that's made by the hoghead in a manufactory; and how would they know what's put in it?" It may be so; but Dr. Fillgrave, it will be remembered, used to sneer at Dr. Thorne, and dub him "the apothecary of Greshamsbury," because he compounded his own drugs in the front room; and out of that sneer grew the Cash Chemist, with his thousand repositories. It is the old story of mechanization and the decline of craft. Some even whisper that Sir Rowe Sigmer, who sends every patient to be X-rayed after his first interview, is a fool at diagnosis if you compare him with Sir Omicron Pie.

That is but a sample of Mr. Bunce's pessimism, which flows out from him, once you tap it, in a stream hardly less copious, hardly less unalterable, than the daily rigmarole with which he shews visitors round the Cathedral. The hotels of Barchester, and the beer sold in them; the want of Sunday observance—oh, Mr. Bunce! And did you not go birds'-nesting, when your limbs were lighter, on the very day when Mr. Slope preached



against the desecration of the Sabbath? The dress of young ladies, and the first-aid they give to their complexions; the noise and dust of motor-cars; the difficulty of getting a boot soled or a chair mended rightly nowadays; the want of generosity—for Mr. Bunce is human—displayed by the modern sight-seer. But I must not be betrayed into a full *résumé* of his diatribe, which, as the reader will recognise, is not a little tedious.

Most of all, as befits his decent gown and the subdued clericalness of his appearance, he laments the decay of religion; and in particular of that Anglicanism which goes with tall, stuffed hassocks, and Tallis in F, and the pleasant smell of musty old prayer-books, and all that his soul loves. Indeed, it may be doubted whether he does not prefer the frank atheism of the Sunday hiker to the sectarian caprices of those who, worshipping in Barchester, worship outside the Cathedral. The faint waft of incense which greets him from the open door of St. Cuthbert's on a summer morning is a stink in his nostrils; and its Gregorian melodies, he assures me, run up his spine like lumbago. He is loud against the wiles of the Nonconformists, with their promises (only too well implemented) of spacious seating accommodation, and their brotherly handshakes at the door. But there is one institution in Barchester of which he can scarcely bring himself to speak; and that is the little church of St. Philomena down by the station. "Since the War," Mr. Bunce says, "there's no holding them Papists."

Here again, I think his perspective is faulty. The Catholic body in the town was growing unobtrusively before the War; and it was Canon Flanagan who raised a loan and added on the aisle which has given St. Philomena's, ever since, a rather lopsided appearance. (It is not easy to add an aisle twice the size of the nave to a little cruciform church without obscuring, in some degree, the original design.) There have been a few conversions since the War, as before it, mostly among the tradespeople. Respectable society in Barchester still centres round the close, and will not look at St. Philomena's, because there is no lichen on it.

All the same, I think it is true that Catholic influence goes further in the town since Father Smith came. Canon Flanagan was better known in people's drawing-rooms; for he was something of a learned man, and even had the audacity to join the literary society—an election which very nearly caused the resignation of several members. As Mrs. Grey said to Mrs. Green, the man looked like an actor dressed up as a clergyman. Father Smith showed no desire at all to move in circles where he did not belong. But he wrote letters to the *West Barchester News*; he sat on local bodies, and hobnobbed with the mayor and councillors, and the wealthy tradesmen who sent their errand-boys, not their wives, to call at the houses in the close. He was a great man, too, for bazaars and baby-shows, which were more free-and-easy, and

therefore more popular, than the severe entertainments given by the official Barchester charities. What can you do to compete with an ordained clergyman who not only organises a donkey-race, but rides himself when one of the jockeys does not come up to scratch? So Father Smith became a figure in Barchester; and on two occasions, of which Mr. Bunce cannot speak without the greatest reluctance, his doings and the doings of his congregation were the talk of the town in the middle 'twenties.

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The first of these occasions was the thousandth anniversary of St. Ewold, who died, according to the best authorities, in the year 925, in the odour of sanctity. As all the world knows, his church lies close to the middle of Barchester, not much above a mile distant from the old city gate. And if it was true, in the middle of last century, that the suburbs of the new town were partly within its precincts, it will easily be believed that to-day the position is reversed—the parish of St. Ewold's is altogether within the precincts of the new town. Ullathorne Court—alas for the glories of its old iron gates, and stone mullions, and lime avenue—passed to the Thornes of Chaldicotes on the death of the old squire, and was sold to the municipality, in the 'nineties, to defray Mr. Francis Thorne's racing debts. It stands for ever open to the public on payment of sixpence—no distinction now, as in the days of the *fête champêtre*, between the

gentry and the countryside; Lookalofts and Green acres swarm, every Saturday afternoon, on the walled paths of Miss Monica Thorne's garden, or admire the exhibition of the town's chief industrial products in Miss Monica Thorne's withdrawing-room. In the grounds, a little removed from the kiosks, the roundabouts, and the begonia-beds, is a little cave labelled in prominent lettering: ST. EWOLD'S SPRING. In old days, before the town waterworks dried up all other moisture in the neighbourhood, a thin trickle of water did actually run here, reputed by our credulous ancestors to be miraculous. (This well is connected by my Author with a "priestess," an anchoress presumably, of later date; but his allusion does not forbid us to believe that the sanctity of the place was already established in her time.)

St. Ewold's shrine in Barchester Cathedral, a costly affair, was looted and levelled with the ground at the Reformation, the saint's bones being interred haphazard, none knows where, in the graveyard. Since then, he has only been remembered as the namesaint of a village, or suburb; the church itself has somehow been re-dedicated to All Saints, and does not commemorate its former patron by so much as a stained-glass window. To the clergy of the Hogglestock diocese the name is nevertheless familiar; St. Ewold is celebrated, in missal and breviary, by a double office, with commemoration of Saints Promiscuus and Miscellaneous. And Father Smith, reciting his office in the year 1924, noticed—

or so he says—the approaching anniversary; nor could he fail, in doing so, to pigeon-hole it in his mind against the occurrence of the day next summer. It is certain that, in January, he made arrangements for the Bishop to come over, and other preparations for doing justice to the event. Nor did he fail to give out notices about it in church long beforehand; for he has, like so many of his brethren, a weakness for interminable notices.

This being admitted, I am still ready to believe that the idea may have occurred independently to the Reverend Charles Awmbry, of St. Cuthbert's, by-the-Walls. Mr. Awmbry did not quite go to extremes, as they did at St. Gregory's in the new part of the town, but he was an avowed ritualist, and his tastes ran much to rood-lofts, font-covers, squints, and antiquarian matters generally. It is not surprising, then, if he came across the mention of St. Ewold in his reading, and was struck in his turn by the approach of the millenary year. Where I cannot quite follow him is in his statement that “the Romans got it from us”. It may be true, as he says, that the idea had been simmering in his mind for months; but it seems a remarkable instance of telepathy if it boiled over into the mind of Father Patrick Smith, who lived nearly half a mile away and had never seen him. Anyhow, it was in the month of March that Mr. Awmbry first clothed this famous idea in words. He was sitting with the Dean at the Puddingdale club-house, over a glass of ginger-beer; and if there was

more in it than meets the eye, that is no business of the reader's or mine, since it was hot weather for the time of year, and golf, as we all know, is a game that takes it out of you.

Not that Mr. Awmbry altogether approved of the Dean, though they were personally friendly. They had the same handicap, but in Church matters they could not go all lengths together. Dr. Letham Allcombe was a new arrival in the diocese, having succeeded old Dean Plumblin in 1918. He was a man of admirable taste, and he had already refurnished all the chapels in the Cathedral with altars (stone altars, some of them), and fitted these out with dossals, testers, and reredoses till you could have sworn that the Reformation had never happened. He was fond, too, of bowings, crossings, and genuflexions, and strange doings were reported by those rare worshippers who attended the early service on weekdays. Indeed, it is generally admitted that Dean Allcombe had done for the services of the Cathedral and the beauty of its ornament what Dean Plumblin did for its lighting, heating, and sanitation. So far, it was all to the good; but then, there was another side to the new dean's activities. His preaching had very little to do with any dogmas of the Church; he welcomed, though in a guarded way, the reform of the divorce laws; and on Armistice Day, or any similar public occasion, he would give seats in choir to the Nonconformist ministers of the town, and bid them read the lessons, which was gall and wormwood to Mr. Awmbry. However,

on the present occasion his aid was indispensable; you cannot do justice to the millenary of a local Saint in a church thirty feet by twenty, as St. Cuthbert's is.

"I was wondering the other day," Mr. Awmbry began, "what we are going to do about St. Ewold." For he had the wisdom of the serpent, and knew that if you are to carry out a great idea, you must make it seem to be the other man's, as much as your own.

Now, the dean had wondered no such thing; and indeed, he supposed at first that Mr. Awmbry was referring to the Church or the parish of that name. He said, "Yes, of course," for he too had the wisdom of the serpent; then he added, "How do you mean, exactly?"

"Well, you know he died a thousand years ago, this summer? I haven't seen attention called to it anywhere, but there's no doubt about the date."

"Really? I'd no idea of that," said the Dean, as if astonished at the quick flight of time. A holy man, you felt, might have been expected to last out longer than that. "Certainly it's a landmark, Awmbry, a landmark. I agreed with you that something ought to be done. What had you in your mind? A pageant—something of that kind?"

"We had a pageant here just before the War. No, I was thinking of something more in the devotional line; a big procession, you know, with

the Cathedral as its starting point, of course, but bringing in St. Ewold's church somehow . . . I hadn't worked it out very definitely in my own mind."

Dr. Allcombe was very much relieved at this mention of the Cathedral. It had just crossed his mind that Mr. Awmbry might be meditating a schismatical procession of his own, in defiance of Mr. Bunce and all that Mr. Bunce stands for in Barchester. He knew now that is was to be a public affair; and the only danger was that he, Dr. Allcombe, might allow himself, as vulgar people say, "to be led by the nose." He must not do anything or promise anything which would compromise his position as a friend of Bethel and Ebenezer; there must be no incense, no invocations, nothing of that sort. "The Bishop, I'm sure, would wish to take part," he said; and Mr. Awmbry understood him perfectly. Dr. Goodenough would not hold up his hands in protest at the idea of holding a procession in honour of a Popish saint, like Bishop Deadletter or Bishop Proudie before him. He would walk in cope and mitre; for he looked well in them, and perhaps did not altogether dislike being treated with the ceremonious reverence which they do so well at St. Cuthbert's. But then, neither would he allow any of the etceteras which Dr. Allcombe dreaded. So the two understood one another; and the Bishop was approached, and it was decided to carry out the procession as a common effort made by all the parishes in the



town. "It will be a witness," the Bishop said, "to the continuity of our faith, in this city of Barchester."

In saying this, Dr. Goodenough no doubt wished his words to be taken as a rough guess at the truth; for he seldom allows that any of his utterances are more than that. In 1834, when St. Ewold had rested for nine hundred years in his tomb (or rather, as we have seen, for five hundred in his own and four hundred in somebody else's), there were no processions, and if the truth must be told, nobody in Barchester took any cognizance of the fact. Yet Bishop Grantley—I mean Bishop Grantley the elder, the father, not the son, of the great Archdeacon—was proud to call himself a High Churchman; and he held the central doctrines of his creed with a notable tenacity, which I fancy would have been more to St. Ewold's mind than the rough guesses for which Dr. Goodenough is so famous. Moreover (as an anonymous correspondent pointed out, very maliciously, in the *West Bassetshire News*), it is on record that St. Ewold took over his see in virtue of a papal brief which dispossessed his uncanonically appointed predecessor. But, whatever might be said about the continuity, the common effort was unmistakable; every parish in Barchester was represented—except, of course, St. Gregory's. Whenever any common effort is made by ecclesiastical Barchester, the people down at St. Gregory's complain that it is "not the real thing."

The day appointed for the ceremony was dull and windy, though no rain fell. Mr. Bunce, who darkly disapproved of the whole proceeding—for who ever saw Archdeacon Grantley, or Mr. Harding, walking through the streets in a surplice? Even Mr. Slope, with all his sins, never was guilty of such an indecency as that—Mr. Bunce, I say, had been prophesying rain with confidence, and scanned every cloud on the horizon with gratified apprehension. The clergy vested in the Cathedral, and in the close outside each parish mustered its own platoon of worshippers, from fifty to two hundred, or thereabouts. Cloche hats, it must be admitted, predominated over bare heads, for gentlemen are not fond of walking in processions, especially when the weather is uncertain. Some of them held their hats close to their heads all through the ceremony, as if ready to pop them on at the first patter of a rain-shower. But they all contrived somehow to achieve a processional air, though the various units differed widely in their interpretation of it—from the red cassocks and rather daring banners of St. Cuthbert's to the furled umbrellas of the Women's Temperance League, which is the direct descendant of Mrs. Proudie's Sabbath Day Observance Society. Boy Scouts were there in great abundance, making a prodigious noise with kettle-drums. And so the procession moved off, with the Bishop at the tail of it carrying his own pastoral staff; through the close they went, and out across the bridge on the London Road, where the police

held up a queue of patient but bewildered motorists, and past the six gables of Hiram's Hospital, and so on to St. Ewold's churchyard.

And here some of the more staunch among the church-people were overtaken by a surprise. The Bishop and the Dean, putting their heads together, had arranged that the procession should be welcomed in the churchyard by representatives of all the leading Nonconformist bodies. Father Smith and his congregation had been invited to come there too; but their refusal was not a surprise, and perhaps not altogether a disappointment. All the others were there, except the Salvation Army, who would not come without their band. And at the head of them stood old Dr. Rantaway, looking indulgently enough at the pastoral staff and even the red cassocks. Who would have believed that, some thirty years before, he had bracketed prelacy with Popery Sunday after Sunday in his pulpit, declaring he would sooner go to prison than support the witchcrafts of the Lambeth Jezebel by paying his rates? He even read a little address of welcome, in which he said nothing at all about St. Ewold, but a good deal about disarmament and the condition of the slums.

And then the Bishop got up into the open-air pulpit which looks out from the North side of St. Ewold's Church, the wind blowing his robes about, and his sermon, too, for that matter; but he has a good voice, and contrived to make himself heard by a crowd of three thousand, or, some said, four

thousand people. It would not be becoming in me to repeat all that he said in these pages. He took his text from the passage about "things new and old"; and he repeated the words "new" and "old" in such a way that he always seemed about to make a pun on the name of the Saint, but never actually did so; for he is a past master of that kind of thing. And he made it abundantly clear that St. Ewold, if he had been with us to-day, would have made a very good Anglican, all contrary appearances notwithstanding. Here, however, the Bishop remembered the presence of old Dr. Rantaway and his brethren; he hastened, therefore, to add, that if St. Ewold had been with us to-day he would have made a very good Nonconformist. And now, if St. Ewold were standing there instead of himself (Bishop Goodenough) what message would he be giving to the people of Barchester? Which message occupied the rest of the sermon; and by a fortunate chance it was exactly the same message which Bishop Goodenough would have delivered in any case, although, as coming from a Saint dead these thousand years, it carried even greater weight if possible.

And then they all came back to the Cathedral, and sang the Te Deum. They say that whenever the first notes of the Cathedral organ tremble into sound, the gentle spirit of Mr. Harding revisits the place he loved so well, and hovers about the worshippers. It would be tempting to speculate what he felt on this occasion; or rather, there is no

room for speculation, because it is all down in black and white in *The Last Chronicles of Barset*.

"I sometimes sit and wonder," said Mr. Harding, "whether your father's spirit ever comes back to the old house and sees the changes—and if so whether he approves them."

"Approves them!" said the Archdeacon.

"Well—yes. I think he would, upon the whole. I'm sure of this; he would not disapprove, because the new ways are changed from his ways."

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Modern Barchester, in any case, approved of the procession, and voted it a great success. There were photographs of it, and of St. Ewold's Church, in the august columns of the *Jupiter*; and a rather smaller one of Mr. Awmbry himself, next to the new Governor of Mauritius. Modern Barchester approved, but not Mr. Bunce. He says the town doesn't like to see the reverend gentlemen walking through the streets making guys of themselves; and that there wasn't nothing of a crowd in St. Ewold's churchyard, not if you compare it with the way people turned out at the Cathedral, the day they put away Mr. Harding. And indeed, there was a curious detachment about the citizens of Barchester when the procession went past, though naturally they stood there to watch it, and some few straggled on behind to listen to the sermon. They did not quite know whether to take their pipes out of their mouths; nor did they register any interest,

except in identifying some familiar figure in the *cortège*. On the whole, I am inclined to think that the citizens of Barchester did not feel it was any concern of theirs; it was no more a part of them than the Catholic procession which they witnessed, still gaping, a fortnight afterwards.

But then, in Barchester as elsewhere, the Church of England has had a price to pay for its Life and Liberty. Organised and clericalized, it does not seem national any longer; it passes, in the public eye, simply as one among a multitude of sects. Mr. Bunce has the deepest suspicions of the Church Assembly, to which he refers as "the folks up in London"; the Establishment, he considers, was in a more flourishing condition when it was governed by archdeacons. Here, doubtless, he is misled by his memories of Archdeacon Grantley; and heaven knows there were faults to find in that golden age, too. But in those days people in Barchester did not refer to "the parsons" as a kind of esoteric body whose strange antics and mysterious quarrels were no concern of theirs. Such, it seems, is the modern opinion of them. This, too, in spite of the lay clothes, and sometimes lay collars, which are becoming increasingly popular among the younger clergymen. In Barchester, as elsewhere, English people have not lost their religion, but they no longer feel that they have any right or need to go to church. When I asked Mr. Bunce how modern congregations in the Cathedral compared with those of his youth, he said, "There's fewer goes, and oftener." And

this, it seems, is what has happened since the War; a rallying of forces within the Church, accompanied by, and producing, a kind of moral disestablishment.

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The Catholic procession a fortnight later was generally considered an anticlimax. True, it was larger; some said that ten thousand people had walked in it; but then, these people came from all over Bassetshire, or from places like Guestwick, in the next county; some of them by excursion trains all the way from London. So Barchester was not dismayed by this display of force; rather, it hastened to turn the opportunity to good account, by selling teas, mineral waters, and picture-postcards in large quantities to the pilgrims. One enterprising stationer, a friend of Father Smith's, did very well indeed with a special picture of that corner of the South transept in which St. Ewold's shrine formerly stood—there is no restored chapel there, because Dean Plumblin had got in first with his heating apparatus. The numbers were large, but as a show it was pronounced disappointing; there was no business of thurifers and wax candles, such as induces the papers to write about the stately ceremonial of the Roman Catholic Church; it was all done in plain clothes. And besides, Mr. Awmbry had managed to be first in the field. As Mrs. Green said to Mrs. Grey, "We have taken the wind out of their sails." Barchester was prepared to believe that St. Ewold had been holy enough to warrant the holding of one procession; but when the

second came along people began to remember that, after all, they had got on very well without him for the last four hundred years. And their opinion of him went down when they learned that, for all his sanctity, he had not escaped the imputation of being a sort of Papist.

But, as we have seen, it was good for trade; and there was besides a sort of mystery about this outlandish gathering, with religious going about in the robes of their order, and a splash of pink and purple to relieve the sober black of all those clerical habiliments. Moreover, Bishop Goodenough was a well known figure, and those who had not seen him at the meeting of protest against Sunday cinemas, had seen him at the opening of the new reservoir. But no good Protestant in Barchester had set eyes on Bishop Umbleby of Hoggstock at all. We have seen how Hoggstock had grown, by the 'nineties, into a huge and very ugly town, quite outstripping Barchester in the matter of population, owing to the increased demand in these days for sanitary earthenware. At the time of the War this demand was somewhat interrupted, but the loyal manufacturers of Hoggstock did not suffer thereby. In the first place, all their machinery for making drainpipes was turned into machinery for making shellcases, at the expense of the taxpayer. And then the manufacturers aforesaid did very loyally and busily turn out shellcases, which they sold to the Government as long as shellcases were needed. Nor, when the Armistice allowed the nation to



dispense with such luxuries, did the industrial princes of Hogglesstock lose their advantage; for their machinery was turned back into machinery for making drain-pipes, once more at the tax-payer's expense, just soon enough to meet the demand for fresh housing which arose about that time. Such are the rewards of patriotism; so that Hogglesstock began to grow larger and uglier than ever, and the Catholic workmen had by now become so numerous that they had a Bishop all of their own, who dressed in purple and fine linen, and signed his letters "P. Hogglesstockien."

But his real name was Patrick Umbleby, and he was the grandson of that same Mr. Yates Umbleby, who managed the business affairs of old Squire Greshams and had to be dismissed when the estate got into difficulties over the Scatcherd mortgage. He was reinstated, I am glad to say, after Frank Gresham's marriage; but not before his son, who held a municipal appointment in Silverbridge, had married an Irishwoman and turned Roman himself, to the great scandal of the district. And their son, having early displayed an aptitude for the clerical state, and being besides a much better man of business than his grandfather, got preferment, and became the first Bishop of Hogglesstock. Such was the man Barchester went out to see; and it found him a red-faced, jovial person, who had a word to spare for everybody he met, even the little altar-boys, and gazed round him cheerfully as he walked in the procession, not looking as if he had swallowed a

poker, as the Barchester dignitaries are apt to do. It was even said that he walked all the way to the station from the great luncheon that was held at the Dragon of Wantly, dressed in his purple robes, with a top hat to crown them; a sight which (as Mr. Bunce says) was never before seen in Barchester.

The procession itself started from the station square, among all the noise of the motor omnibuses, since Father Smith had no Cathedral close, with elms and rooks in it, at his disposal. And it went, not to the churchyard of St. Ewold's, but to the public park at Ullathorne Court already mentioned, and the cave from which the miraculous water used to flow, until it was dried up by the new reservoir. Father Smith had arranged with the town clerk that his pilgrims should be allowed in on that day for twopence a head; and a very good bargain the town council made of it. At the well, there were sundry gabblings and mutterings in Latin, with a hymn to follow; and then a clergyman got up to preach in the habit of his order—which habit gave rise to much speculation among the onlookers, it being the common opinion that he was a Benedictine Jesuit. He had much to say about the good old times and the story of King Henry's divorce; but before long he fell into the same gambit as Bishop Goodenough before him, inviting his audience to consider what St. Ewold would be saying to them if he were present personally. As Mr. Topnotch said, the Vicar of St. Gregory's (for he was present incognito upon both occasions), St. Ewold must have had a very

adaptable mind; for the message he gave them on that Saturday was quite other than the message he had delivered in his own churchyard, only a fortnight before.

Mr. Bunce says, "If this sort of thing goes on now, what are we to expect in fifty years' time?" And I am inclined to think he is right.

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And now I must ask the reader to attend to Mr. Bunce's other grievance; I mean the matter of the Dumbello-Lufton engagement, which exercised the minds of all the people who counted in Barchester about the same time. It will be remembered that long ago, in the 'sixties, young Lord Lufton was all but engaged to Griselda Grantley, the Archdeacon's daughter; and might, indeed, have had her for the asking if he had been a little quicker off the mark at Miss Dunstable's conversazione. Lord Lufton, however, did not second his mother's wishes in this regard, being at the time desperately in love with Lucy Robarts, the parson's sister. So Griselda did better for herself, becoming engaged there and then to Lord Dumbello, the Marquis of Hartletop's heir; and it was the general opinion that it must have been touch of hand or turn of head that did it, for Lord Dumbello and Griselda Grantley were the two most silent people in London. It might have been supposed that Barsetshire would have heard little more of the Archdeacon's daughter, or of her descendants, since the Hartletop property was in a

different county altogether. But you must know that in the 'nineties, when Mr. Francis Thorne had to sell his property, the Hartletops bought up Chaldicotes, that had once been the home of Mr. Nathaniel Sowerby, and turned it into a very eligible country estate—the more readily, because it made them near neighbours of their friend, the Duke of Omnium. So that we are still concerned with a Lord Dumbello, grandson of that Lord Dumbello who is familiar to the readers of the earlier chronicles.

Griselda and her husband are described, it will be remembered, as "non-impulsive"; impulsiveness is the fault, if it be a fault, attributed to Ludovic Lufton and Miss Robarts. It was only to be expected that the offspring of such a match should be deficient in worldly prudence. But there are degrees of imbecility; and the county was quite unprepared for the shock when young Mark Lufton (nephew and godson as he was of that eminently discreet clergyman, Mr. Robarts) conceived an infatuation for the younger daughter of Sir Harkaway Gorse. The Gorse family was very old, and its members were respected in the county, where they had ridden to hounds ever since man could remember. But they had no money—and in those days, with the decline of agricultural property, a comfortable jointure would have been a godsend to the Framley estate; and, to make things worse, they were and had ever been Roman Catholics. Hitherto they had married into other families of their own persuasion, and there had been no harm done; but now the lure of Rome

was to be spread over the countryside. For a moment, indeed, it looked as if the peril was to be averted; for the young lady, it was rumoured, had absolutely declined to give her hand to anybody who was not of the same faith. This resolve was applauded by the county, until the sequel became known; which was that young Mark Lufton, nephew and godson as he was of Dr. Robarts, the Bishop-elect of Papua, had allowed himself to be spirited away by the Jesuits into some oubliette of the Brompton Oratory, and had there renounced his Protestant faith. The consternation was general; but none took it harder than Ludovic Lufton, the father; he swore that he would disinherit his heir and never speak to him again, and seemed to have forgotten altogether the old days in which he himself announced his intention of marrying the parson's sister, even though it should break his mother's heart.

What is more, he carried out his threat; and when he died soon afterwards, it was found that he had left most of his money to a distant relative, and with it the house which he himself had built at Lufton, a work of which he was inordinately proud. For myself, I think his descendants were well out of it, for it was built by the great architect, Mr. Cheesemeadow, in the manner of the time; that is to say, it was large, draughty, and uncomfortable within, and as ugly outside as red, blue and yellow bricks could make it. A stranger, confronted for the first time with its appearance, is led to suppose that a Norman baron must have employed a fifteenth

century Venetian architect to build it. Meanwhile, the imprudent young couple had settled down very comfortably at Framley, where they brought up a large family in a *harum-scarum* sort of fashion; boys and girls who rode on horseback almost as soon as they could walk, mimicked the solemn voice of their parish priest, and played the gramophone interminably.

Of these children Daphne Lufton was the eldest. Everybody who was competent to be a judge in the matter, agreed that she was the living image of her paternal grandmother. She had the flashing eyes, with their long and soft lashes, she had the perfect teeth her grandmother had; but like her grandmother she was short and brown, and never learned from her great-aunt Blanche, to walk like a goddess. Such an appearance, as we know, went for nothing in Victorian drawing-rooms; so that Griselda Grantley, with her one recorded flash of feeling, could refer to Lucy Roberts as a "dumpy little black thing," and even old Lady Lufton asked in despair, "Is she not insignificant?" But in these later times her grand-daughter, Daphne, took rank, from the moment of her coming out, as one of the reigning beauties, while those tall and stately creatures the Victorians admired, stood by the wall and watched her enviously. She had been bred, of course, at a convent; what she learned there I cannot determine, but certainly it was not unworldliness, or prudery, or reticence. She accepted the position of a reigning beauty quite unabashed.

As for Lord Dumbello, I cannot pretend that he is a favourite of mine. He does not, indeed, inherit from his grandfather that gift of silence which so distinguished him. But there are those who think the grandfather would have done well to bequeath him the gift of silence, if he could not bequeath him enough brains to think of anything worth saying. The present Lord Dumbello is a devotee of sound; which sound he produces by mechanical means whenever it is possible, by turning on a gramophone or a very loud loudspeaker, or driving a fast motor-car which seems to clear its throat at frequent intervals. Failing such mechanical noises, he is driven back upon the sound of his own voice, which keeps up a continuous flow of light conversation, mostly in the form of catchwords; at times, even when in company, he will break into song. Without much in the way of intellectual equipment, he is nevertheless a Hartletop; it was therefore to be expected of him that he should make a suitable marriage, and find his way into Parliament; the only institution capable of hushing a voice which is so potent outside it. In appearance he reminds his friends of those horses which you may see walking on two legs in Mr. Webster's clever cartoons.

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The first meeting between Lucy Robarts and Ludovic Lufton was on a country road; soon after that Lucy dined at Framley Court, where (after dinner) Griselda Grantley played and Fanny Robarts

sang; " Lord Lufton sang also, a little, and Captain Culpepper a very little, so that they got up a concert among them." Lucy, who neither played nor sang, sat alone, turning over the leaves of a book of pictures, for fear of seeing Lord Lufton " turning over " for her rival. The first meeting between Daphne Lufton and " Goof " Dumbello (for by that unflattering name his friends called him) was of quite a different kind. They met in London, at the house of a common acquaintance, where some fifty or sixty persons were standing round (for there were hardly any chairs), apparently paying no attention to a deafening noise in one corner of the room, expressive of the emotions felt by West Indian natives. They were also drinking cocktails; for this was in the days before Sir Rowe Sigmer had warned us about the effect of cocktails upon the coats of the stomach, to the great advantage of all those concerned in the importing of indifferent brown sherry.

Lord Dumbello, at this time in the evening, was decidedly tipsy; and when he ran into Daphne Lufton, who was then a complete stranger to him, he upset a glassful of heavily sweetened gin over her frock. The young lady accepted this Grecian present in a more accommodating spirit than her grandmother would have, possibly because the frock was so much shorter; and she appeared to regard it as a sufficient explanation when Lord Dumbello said he had not caught her name properly. After that they danced together; not in silence, like those



other two at the conversazione, but shouting freely to one another. She said she adored the Sitwells, and he said so did he; he said he liked Mary Pickford, and she said she did too; he wondered whether there was any future for the talking film, and she said she had often wondered the same thing; she said she supposed Labour would get in next time, and he said he supposed it was time the poor devils got a chance. Nothing further took place in the way of mutual endearments; but Lord Dumbello declared to his friends, in the language of the period, that "he thought he had clicked."

And so it went on; for three or four months the two met frequently, and behaved as engaged couples used to behave in the days of our parents. At the end of that time Lord Dumbello proposed marriage. His language on this occasion may well have fallen short of his usual oratorical level; for he was driving in his car, close on midnight, at the pace of about fifty miles an hour, and his attention was necessarily somewhat distracted. Lucy Robarts, when Lord Lufton made his proposal, refused him, and even went so far as to declare that she did not love him, wishing to spare him the family difficulties which, she foresaw, would ensue. Her granddaughter had no such presentiments, or at any rate, no such scruples; for, after a moment or two of reflexion, she admitted that as far as she could see there was not much wrong with the proposition. After which Lord Dumbello did reduce his driving pace to thirty-five miles an hour, and they proceeded

to discuss the matter more in detail. Neither party made any allusion to the feelings of their respective families, although Miss Lufton did, at one point, interpose a note of warning. "I believe, you know," she said, "that the kids will have to be brought up R.C." To which Lord Dumbello replied that she was welcome to turn the little bounders into Mahommedans, if it afforded her any pleasure.

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The Hartletops and the Luftons did not know one another, though Chaldicotes is less than ten miles away from Barchester, and Framley not much more. In old days, this could scarcely have happened; although in old days political feeling ran much higher. The Luftons and the de Courcys, for example, did not approve of one another, but they met now and again; and there was even an occasion, as we know—though to be sure that was in London—when old Lady Lufton actually made her curtsy to the Duke of Omnium himself. This division of Society in accordance with politics did not outlast the nineteenth century, although there was a moment, just before the War, when the Ulster question threatened to revive it. There was no reason, then, why the Hartletops and the Luftons should not have known one another in the 'twenties, except that the Luftons were on the whole old-fashioned, while the Hartletops always swam with the times. But then, in these modern days there was no reason why they should know one another. The motor-car, in bring-

ing us all closer together, by making it easy to have luncheon two counties away, has driven us all further apart, by making it unnecessary for us to know the people in the next bungalow. And so, once again, we have to thank civilisation for nothing.

The Hartletops, I say, did not know the Luftons; and therefore it was necessary for Lord Dumbello to sit down and write a letter to his mother; for it is always easiest to break the ice in such matters by means of the general post. Lord Dumbello was less ready with his pen than with his tongue, and therefore I do not recommend his epistle as a model to be imitated by my readers, if they should find themselves in a situation similar to his. But his letters to his parents, if they were not distinguished by any particular elegance of literary diction, made up for this by their rarity value.

"Dear Mum," (he wrote), "This is to tell you the great news that I have just got engaged; and of course it's nothing at all to do with what we were talking about last October. Her name is Daphne Lufton, and she's one of those Framley people. She's definitely marvellous, mum; I don't suppose you'd remember her, but I did bring her round to the flat once, that night the police wanted to come in, do you remember? I've known her a little for some time now, but I must say I never realized till quite lately how definitely marvellous she is. There's simply nothing for you to do but to rally round and sling bouquets. I am bringing her over one day next week, as soon as she comes back from a joy-ride on the Continent. We are thinking of June. Best love from your loving DENIS.

"P.S. I forgot to say she is R.C. but quite broadminded."

I do not know what would have been thought if (say) Frank Gresham had written to Lady Arabella announcing, in such terms, his intention of marrying Miss Thorne. But Lady Hartletop, although she, too, was a de Courcy, and liked to arrange her children's affairs for them, was not unduly disturbed by this missive; indeed, she was actually relieved by it, for rumours had reached her, not long before, that Lord Dumbello intended to link his destinies with those of a young lady on the variety stage. As for Miss Lufton, she could not remember the meeting, but there was no difficulty about conjuring up her image; for Miss Lufton was much photographed, and it was only necessary to turn up an illustrated magazine of the previous week, in which her future daughter-in-law was represented, gazing soulfully at a Pekingese dog; and under this I am very sorry to say that the editor of *The Snob* had written "The Hon. Daphne Lufton talking to a Friend."

And here the reader will be tempted to exclaim, "Oh, Lord Dumbello, what of the sacred character of truth? What of that difficulty about religious education, and that promise of thine, so lightly made, condemning the little Dumbellos (if need be) to embrace the creed of the Prophet, and drink no more of the port that lies in the Hartletop cellars? Oh, Lord Dumbello, is not a man's best friend his mother, and shouldest thou not have been open with her at such a time as this?" The reader, I say, will be tempted to make some such exclamation,

if he be an experienced reader of the Barsetshire chronicles. But to do Lord Dumbello justice, I believe it is true to say he attached no importance whatever to the question of religious education, and was moreover incapable of imagining that anybody (at least in his own section of Society) could do so. If Miss Lufton had asked that her children might be brought up as wet-bobs (for Lord Dumbello had been a cricketer), or that they should be sent to Cambridge (for Lord Dumbello was an Oxford man), then indeed there might have been a little rift within the lute of his affections. But, since he had abandoned the practices of religion at the age of eighteen, and nearly all his acquaintances had done the same, it did not occur to him that education in such matters could be looked upon otherwise than as a formality.

He did, indeed, when he saw his mother (for she rang him up on the telephone exchange at once, and asked herself to luncheon at his flat), mention this unaccountable scruple on the part of his betrothed. "I suppose she will want the family to be R.C. and all that, won't she?" was his way of putting it. To which his mother discreetly replied that it was no use meeting troubles half-way. She had been about to say "counting your chickens before they are hatched," but rejected this phrase as savouring of indelicacy. It was no use meeting troubles half-way, she said; and it must be admitted that most of the children born to the Hartleap family have been troubles in one way or another,

these three generations past. What the Marchioness meant was, that if she were left to herself and nothing more were said about the matter on either side, she would make herself responsible for the Protestant education of any little troubles Dumbello and his wife might have. She would not have much difficulty, she felt, with a girl who could be photographed in that sort of attitude. And indeed, Lady Hartletop has so much experience in managing other people's affairs for them that she can afford to have confidence in her own powers.

Miss Lufton also wrote to her mother; and the next thing she did was to have an interview with a clergyman of her own persuasion. For she did not feel quite so certain as her betrothed that there would be no difficulties about religion; had not her own family suffered from such difficulties, not so very long ago? Miss Lufton was not particularly devout; she had no special father confessor to whom she confided her worries. So she did what everybody else does; she went and saw Father Sanctuary. Father Sanctuary has a great reputation for dealing with difficult problems, and therefore people are continually coming to him with problems which are not difficult at all, so that he is never idle. He is a little old man who looks at you with the merest hint of a smile in his eye, and always says exactly what he thinks. When he heard that she was going to marry a Protestant, he said at once, "That's a pity."

"Oh, I know you all disapprove of mixed mar-

riages," she said. "But one can't go on waiting about indefinitely till a Catholic turns up who will do, can one?"

"I was thinking of you," said the clergyman. "I don't think you've got religion enough for two. Still, I hope it will prove a great success. What did you want to ask me about exactly?"

"Well . . . the promises. I suppose I ought to know about that, but it is true, isn't it, that all the children of a mixed marriage have to be brought up as Catholics?"

"Yes; and he has to promise to abide by that before the dispensation is given. And, of course, the wedding will have to take place before a Catholic priest, and there must be no other religious ceremony. Those two things are what make the trouble—to begin with."

Daphne Lufton looked at him curiously when he said this, but she did not trouble to follow the line of his thought. "And if I were married in a Protestant church?" she asked.

"You wouldn't be married, that's all."

"But isn't that rather narrow-minded—I mean, saying that Protestant weddings don't count? The parsons do their best, after all."

"Oh, but weddings between two Protestants do count; or two Jews for that matter. They marry according to their own rules; we Catholics marry according to ours. When it's a mixed marriage, it's elevated to the position of a Catholic marriage; it's like the strong man armed, don't you know, in

the Gospel. You, who have known the truth, can't be content with a second best; that's the point."

"Yes, I see. Naturally, I want to do the right thing."

"Of course you do. But perhaps you're afraid he won't be willing to make the promises—is that it?"

"Who—Goof? He'll simply do what I tell him. The poor mutt's crazily in love with me, you know."

"Well, well. Let's only hope, then, that his family won't make any trouble about it."

"The Hartletop woman will kick like a mule, I've no doubt. But I think I can manage her all right. Thank you very much, Father; I just wanted to know where I get off."

Mr. Bunce would be the first to point out that Lucy Robarts never spoke in those terms of old Lady Lufton.

When Griselda's engagement was announced, in the old days, there was great jubilation at Plumstead. The Hartletops might be Whigs, but a Marquis is always a Marquis. Daphne Lufton's mother felt no such jubilation in her turn; nor on the other hand did she feel discontented that her daughter should be marrying into a different set. She was a much-worried woman, and had long made up her mind that Daphne's matrimonial arrangements would be the source of fresh worry; that a great many tiresome arrangements would have to be made, was her



first reflection on this, as on most other incidents that disturbed the tenor of her daily life. When Lady Hartletop called to "have a talk," Lady Lufton foresaw a long business interview about settlements, dowries, and wedding invitations. It was not until her guest introduced the subject of the wedding ceremony that she perceived they were at cross purposes. "I suppose," said Lady Hartletop (after she had finished with "What a nice place you have here," and the other conventional amenities), "I suppose," said Lady Hartletop, "that the young people will want to be married in your church first."

Now, this was great condescension in Lady Hartletop. The bridegroom was contributing, on this occasion, nearly all the social splendour; he was the heir to a marquisate, and his mother was of an earl's family; whereas the bride was but a baron's daughter, and that baron had been cut off with a shilling. It was a case, once more, of King Cophetua and the beggar-maid—and let it not be thought strange that, in these days of democracy, such a woman should entertain such ideas; for the de Courcys, although they were always Liberals, have kept their sense of social values intact. The bridegroom, to put it bluntly, was paying the piper, and it is an old saying that he who pays the piper calls for the tune; it was his right, therefore, if he would, to be married to the tune of "The Voice that breathed o'er Eden" rather than Gounod's Ave Maria. But it is sometimes more gracious not

to insist on your rights; and, after all, the conventions of society decree that the bride should be married from the bride's home; so coyly reluctant is she, we must suppose, to leave the safety of the parental nest. In this case, then, the bride should be married from her own church first; Lady Hartletop did not expect gratitude, but she felt conscious, it must be admitted, of a certain generosity.

"First?" said Lady Lufton, bewildered. "Oh, I see what you mean; but I'm afraid that dot-and-carry-one business isn't allowed. Just as well, too; it would run into a lot of money. I thought Lord Dumbello had agreed it should be at the Oratory?"

Lady Hartletop felt sorely tried. She gave Lady Lufton no credit for her well-meant, but certainly not tactful, effort to laugh off an embarrassing situation. She did not like to hear her carefully devised schemes described as a "dot-and-carry-one business," and, being a de Courcy, she had never consented to the post-War fashion of talking about your income in public. But she was determined to keep her temper. "I think you must be wrong there," she said. "I know when my nephew, John, married a daughter of Countess Getemoff, they had two services one after the other. As for Dumbello, he would agree to anything."

"Yes, but that was the Greek Church," Lady Lufton expostulated, mildly enough. "Daphne wouldn't be able to get leave from the Bishop, you know, if there were any arrangement" (she just saved herself from saying "any nonsense")

"of that kind. I know it's worrying for you, Lady Hartletop; but you know what young people are nowadays, they never think about their families at all, do they? I certainly understood that Lord Dumbello had agreed about the church; and, of course, about the promises."

This was the first Lady Hartletop had heard about the promises; and she was not quick enough to conceal her ignorance, as Dr. Letham Allcombe was when Mr. Awmbry brought in the subject of St. Ewold. When it was made clear to her that her son would not only have to be married by a Popish priest, without any of his Grantley relations to assist, but that he would have to pledge himself beforehand about his children's education, she was very angry indeed. I cannot pretend that Lady Hartletop is a great churchwoman; her husband (who was then taking the waters at a foreign spa) did not fulfil the necessary conditions to qualify him for membership of the House of Laymen; and she, though she contributed to Church funds, did not as a rule put those offerings in the plate herself, preferring to send them through the general post. But she was a Whig, and therefore she entertained an ancestral horror of all Papal aggression; she was a modern, and therefore she thought everything that appertained to the Catholic Church dreadfully behind the times. She did not, like Ludovic Lufton in the same circumstance, feel that her son was betraying his Protestant faith by contemplating such a marriage. But she felt that she was being driven, and she hated

being driven by anybody. Therefore, as I say, Lady Hartletop was very angry; and when she left she declared her intention of going and seeing the priest herself, to find out if something could not be done about it. For it was her experience of clergymen that they always made difficulties, but you could generally get them to see reason if you went and talked to them.

Unfortunately, she talked to other people first; and talked in such a way as to let it be seen that she was not too pleased with Lord Dumbello's choice of a bride. Whereupon Dame Rumour arose, and flew round the pinnacles of Barchester, with all those tongues and mouths the Latin poet has told us about. The Luftons kept very much to themselves at Framley in those days, so that Barchester Close was able to construct its own picture of this designing Dido, who was luring away the Hartletop Aeneas from his commonsense and from the path of duty to his noble line. The priests, somehow, were behind it all, that was a matter of common agreement; though how in the world Father Smith or Bishop Umbleby could have caused Lord Dumbello to spill his cocktail over Miss Lufton's dress at a party in Chelsea, might have been a question to puzzle these teatable critics. The rumour went round that Lord Dumbello was to become a Papist, hotly pursued by the rumour that Miss Lufton was to become a Protestant; representations had been made through his Majesty's Envoy at the Vatican to get the Pope to stop the whole thing; Lord

Dumbello, in spite of his age, was to be made a ward in Chancery by a special Order in Council; Lord Dumbello was to be sent to Hollywood until such time as he should cure himself of his infatuation; he was under treatment from a famous psychoanalyst. But these stories were only half-believed; what seemed certain was that unless something were done, the line of Hartletop would become, for ecclesiastical purposes, extinct. As Mrs. Grey said to Mrs. Green, it wasn't as if it were just anybody.

All this meant a good deal of irritation for Father Smith, who was simultaneously informed of the engagement and of the Machiavellian part he was supposed to have played in bringing it about. Indeed, on the very morning on which Lady Hartletop called, he had received two anonymous letters, in which he was roundly accused of playing Juno to the insidious Dido of Framley Court. Now, Father Smith had a particular horror of mixed marriages, and would not so much as put on a surplice when he was called upon to solemnize them, until his bishop directed him that he ought to do so. He was not, therefore, in a very good temper when Lady Hartletop called; but he did his best to appear sympathetic, and anxious to help. Lady Hartletop looked round the uncomfortable reception room into which she was shown, with the cracked image of the Virgin on the mantelpiece, and the faded blotting-paper on the table, and told herself that she would have to deal with a simple, unworldly man,

who could be bluffed into accordance with her wishes if he could not be cajoled into it.

"I do so agree," she said, "that it's much more satisfactory to have everything in black and white; and I do respect your Church for having rules to guide people. Poor people especially are so shiftless, aren't they, unless one gives them a lead? But I do think in this case it would be best if we all just left the young people alone, and allowed things to work themselves out naturally, without any undertakings beforehand. Lord Dumbello will certainly be very much guided by his wife, and is almost too ready to fall in with every whim of hers. I think he will always be an indulgent husband. But what he feels, I think, is that he doesn't like to have promises exacted of him, because it seems to shew a kind of distrust, as if the bride's family doubted his good intentions. It's just the feeling of obligation that worries him."

In saying this, Lady Hartletop was, I am sorry to say, mixing up truth and falsehood, as I am sorry to say many people do. It was quite true that Lord Dumbello was likely to make an indulgent husband. I will not go so far as to say that Lord Dumbello was a mutt, although this, as we have seen, was the description given of him by his betrothed. But I think it may safely be said that his was, on the whole, a yielding disposition. On the other hand, she was wrong in representing her son as a man on whom obligations weighed heavily, as those can testify who have been privileged to lend Lord Dumbello

small sums of money at his club. And she was quite wrong in saying that Lord Dumbello felt this or that about it, for as we have seen he had, over the religious question, as nearly as possible no feelings whatever.

Father Smith may possibly have had some inkling of all this, but he gave no sign of it. "I certainly think it's true generally," he said, "that the fewer promises are made the better. I'd always sooner trust to a man's nature, myself, than to his word. But you see, Lady Hartletop, you haven't quite got the right view of the thing. You talk as if the promise were made to the family of the Catholic party; that's not so, they are made to the Church. For instance, if anything should happen to Miss Lufton, or rather Lady Dumbello as she would be, while the children were still infants, what would be the position then? Why, you would say to yourselves at once that the surviving parent was the right person to arrange about their education; and unless Lord Dumbello is a very extraordinary man, he would fall in with that point of view, instead of bothering himself about what his wife would have wanted if she had lived. But the Church doesn't take that point of view; she claims that they are her children, and therefore she insists on having it in black and white that, come what may, they will be treated so. I'm sorry, Lady Hartletop, but I think it will save discussion if I assure you from the start that the arrangement you suggest is quite impossible. The dispensation would never be given on those terms."

Lady Hartletop began to lose her patience a little. "Well, I must say it seems very extraordinary to me," she said. "And that applies to *all* the children? I had an idea that an arrangement was sometimes made, by which the boys were brought up in their father's religion, and the girls in their mother's."

"It has been tolerated before now, in countries where the State law insisted on it. The Church only agreed under protest. You see, it's like the judgment of Solomon; the real Mother must have everything or nothing."

I think Father Smith was ill-advised to make this little excursion into mysticism. Lady Hartletop thought she was being laughed at, though indeed there was no intention of laughter on his part. So, instead of continuing the negotiations, she decided to play her last card; to use bluff instead of cajolery. To bring this man to his senses, she must threaten him with the loss of all his cherished schemes; the loss of all the little unborn Hartletops who were to reflect such lustre on the Romish Church in years to come.

"Well, Father Smith," she said, "I am sorry to find you so unaccommodating. However, no doubt you are unable to go beyond the orders of your superiors. All I can say is that, if you persist in this attitude, I shall use all my influence with my son and with those around him to prevent the wedding taking place."

"Thank you, Lady Hartletop," said Father Smith. "I was sure you would see it in that light."



I shall be very grateful to you for your efforts; I don't doubt in the long run it will be much the best for all parties."

After that, Lady Hartletop took her leave. To this day, on the rare occasions when she tells the story, she professes herself unable to determine whether the man was bluffing.

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As a matter of fact, Lady Hartletop had no intention of preventing the wedding taking place. She knew well enough that, if Lord Dumbello were thus forcibly rescued from the Roman Scylla, he would only fall back into the Charybdis of the variety stage; and although Lady Hartletop patronized that stage, she was not inclined to go to it for her daughters-in-law. No, that little threat to Father Smith had been bluff and nothing more; worsted in this encounter, she determined that the wedding should take place without any promises, and therefore without any dispensations. She met the young lady of her son's choice, and was not impressed. Miss Lufton, as I have said, had not much religion; and, by a defensive trick common with such people, she gave you the impression of having less. Lady Hartletop thought she could be managed; but first, there was the question of managing Dumbello. He must be worked up, somehow, into a frenzy of indignation over the demand that was being made of him. This was not so easy; you will bend the oak before you can stiffen the reed. On the whole, it

seemed best that Dumbello should go and see a clergyman. Having reached this conclusion, she did not hesitate at all about her choice; he must go and see Mr. Easyman.

I have never been able to establish with certainty whether Mr. Easyman is related to that Dr. Easyman who used to travel with Miss Dunstable, as her medical practitioner, before she became Mrs. Thorne; but I am inclined to think that he is. He holds the prebend which was formerly held by Dr. Vesey Stanhope, and lives, for the greater part of the year, in that house which was let to Mrs. Wiggins, the tallow-chandler's widow, while Dr. Stanhope lived in Italy for his health. He was a fellow of his College at Cambridge, and afterwards vicar of a fashionable church in London, where he became known as a preacher, chiefly from his habit of always saying the opposite of what you would have expected a clergyman to say. Mr. Easyman belongs to no party in the Church; he is always dressed in immaculate lay clothes, except on Sundays; he writes thoughtful, though perhaps not very profound articles in the monthly reviews, and he is well known to be the best man in the Barchester diocese for handling a difficult situation. If any man can gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles, it is he.

Lord Dumbello, then, was bidden to drive his car into Barchester one fine morning, when he was at Chaldicotes, and to interview Mr. Easyman; on his way back he was to call at Aunt Eleanor's house and

enquire after Aunt Eleanor's health—for Lady Hartle-top, like most people who were alive in the days before motor-cars, can never resist the temptation of killing two birds with one stone, when any expedition is made into the nearest town. So he set out, not with the best of grace, and soon found himself seated in the very room where the signora made a fool of Mr. Slope, years before; and opposite him sat Mr. Easyman, smoking a cigarette through a long holder, and instructing him in his duty towards the Church of his baptism.

Mr. Easyman began by hazarding the guess that Lord Dumbello was not a frequent church-goer; and Lord Dumbello admitted that he was not. Mr. Easyman seemed, if anything, relieved by this admission, and pointed out that many people nowadays, did not find it natural to express their highest feelings by any act of common worship. Nevertheless, he went on, we all have our higher natures, and to those natures we must be true; otherwise we sell our birthright for a mess of pottage. And Lord Dumbello, who had no idea what he was talking about, admitted that this was so. Then Mr. Easyman explained that, whereas Christians differed greatly among themselves, and even Church people differed greatly among themselves, about the doctrines in which they believed, we were all at least united in what we disbelieved. And chiefly, he added, warming a little to his subject, we were united in our disbelief in the claims of any arrogant Church which would tyrannize over men's consciences and interfere

with the sanctities of family life. To which Lord Dumbello, who was beginning to perceive the drift of the argument, replied that as far as he could see, that was about the size of it.

I must not attempt to follow Mr. Easyman's learned argument throughout its entire course; but the general gist of it was that it was quite wrong to influence and warp the minds of the young by giving them any kind of religious instruction, instead of leaving them to formulate, as the result of their own experience, their individual reactions towards the Unseen. To which Lord Dumbello, who had conceived, at Eton College, a violent distaste for the institution known as Sunday Questions, assented readily enough. Therefore, went on Mr. Easyman, it would be wrong for Lord Dumbello to bind himself by any promises with respect to his children's education; and more especially by any promises which would condemn them to an education so definite, and frequently so ineradicable, as that given by the Romanists. And Lord Dumbello, who was beginning to get tired of the interview, said that there was the deuce of a lot in that point of view, when you came to look squarely at it, and he would put it to Daphne, he was dashed if he wouldn't. After which he was bowed out, and, by a lucky chance, remembered to call and enquire after Aunt Eleanor.

Dear Aunt Eleanor—Eleanor Harding, then Eleanor Bold, then Eleanor Arabin; she was a centenarian, and long widowed, and bedridden,

and yet, after the manner of those wonderful old ladies you meet sometimes, she had retained all her faculties, and had great shrewdness of judgment; and somehow she contrived to hear all the news that was going in Barchester as soon as other ladies who had the use of their legs, and could exchange the gossip with one another after the evening service. She was, it need hardly be said, Lord Dumbello's great-great-aunt, and he was thoroughly frightened of her; so that it was his intention merely to ask the parlour-maid how she did, and then return, at fifty miles an hour, to Chaldicotes. But his luck was out; a message left at the door insisted that he must come up and see her if he called. Whether Lord Dumbello was right in suspecting a fresh plot on the part of the Marchioness, I do not know, but he certainly did suspect it.

Now Aunt Eleanor was a romanticist; and all her life she had been ready to stand up for anybody whom she heard criticized. She had fallen in love with John Bold, when John Bold was trying to dislodge her own father from his comfortable position as Warden of Hiram's Hospital; and although the Archdeacon was quite wrong in thinking that she intended to marry Mr. Slope, so much so that Mr. Slope got his ears boxed when he tried to make love to her, nevertheless she did defend Mr. Slope when all the ladies of her set in Barchester believed him to be a sort of emanation from the infernal regions. And her old heart was still warm in its championship of the oppressed; so that, when she heard there was

talk of forbidding the banns of matrimony between her young relative and the lady of his choice, she determined to take a hand in the game. "Tell me," she said, when Lord Dumbello had dutifully enquired after her health, "do you love this young lady with all the affection an honourable man may feel? Would you give your life for hers cheerfully, if that sacrifice were possible? If she became a life-long invalid, or if that pretty face of hers were disfigured permanently by some dreadful accident, would you still love her, and devote your days to comforting her, without a thought for anyone else? Can you care for her like that?"

It may safely be said that Lord Dumbello had never hitherto considered these contingencies, and he found some difficulty in envisaging them. It was true that he was in love; he felt (as he put it to himself) all gooey when Miss Lufton was in the same room with him, and there was an unaccountable void about the front seat of his car at those times when she was not sharing it with him. But Lord Dumbello is not one to write a sonnet about the remains of his mistress' eyebrow. He had never indulged in any heroics about his feelings; had never lain awake at night longing for precipices and wild bulls from which to deliver his *inamorata*. And therefore, when his great-great-aunt called upon him to analyze his own symptoms, borrowing her style of oratory (if the truth must be told) from an allocution which the Signora Neroni had made to herself long, long ago, Lord Dumbello did not know what to

make of it. He was silent, and stood there looking (if such an expression may be used about the heir to a Marquisate) decidedly sheepish.

"If you have such love for her," continued the old lady, "marry her, and don't let priest or parson stand in your way." Soon afterwards Lord Dumbello bowed himself out. He was, so he told himself as he got into his car, fed to the teeth. It was not enough that he should be lectured by clergymen half the morning on the duty of disbelief; he must needs be talked to as if he were a mixture of Bayard and whatever the other man's name was by an old lady, whose amatory experiences had come to an end, presumably, about the year dot. This kind of thing must stop. And suddenly, as he came to that decision, he saw how he might cut the Gordian knot of his difficulties; he would persuade Daphne to go off to a register office and be married there quietly, with whatever undertakings she cared to exact. He had a notion, to be sure, that her ecclesiastical advisers would not welcome this drastic solution; but then, his family would be much more annoyed about it than hers, which was a kind of compensation. Full of these thoughts, Lord Dumbello turned his car round and made for London; only stopping in Barchester to warn his betrothed, through the electric telegraph, that he proposed to do himself the honour of waiting upon her.

He was not fortunate in the moment he had chosen for putting his scheme forward. Miss Lufton was kneeling on the ground, attending to the comfort of

her Pekingese dog, which had fallen sick. At that moment she was regaling the animal on a solution of aspirin tablets in warm milk. I must not be understood to recommend this as a specific for canine ailments, but apparently Miss Lufton had faith in it. Her lover, realising that conversation would be out of place at the present juncture, threw himself into a chair and found relief in song. "Ain't no sense in sitting on a fence all by yourself in the moonlight," carolled Lord Dumbello.

"I wish you wouldn't make that filthy row," protested the lady of his choice. "Can't you see that poor darling Scroggs is at death's door, and *must* have quiet?"

"All right, all right," said the young man, hastily revising his bedside manner. "I expect you've been feeding him something too rich; confoundedly greedy beggars. When you've finished vetting him, I had an idea to put up to you, that's all."

"I can't listen to any of your ideas. Don't you see I haven't the heart to think about anything else, with poor Scroggs like this?"

And here Lord Dumbello made an error in tactics, which many have made before and since. "Of course," he said, "if you think I'm less important than a beastly dog——"

"Less important than a dog? You bet I do. Let me tell you this, if you were a dog I'd chain you up at the front door to scare tramps away. And if anybody comes along and tells you that you and I are engaged, you have my authority to inform him that



he's making the biggest mistake of his life, and he'd better think again."

Alas, alas, Lord Dumbello, what will avail henceforth those frenzied prayers of thine, those unavailing visits at doors that will not yield to thee, those gifts of flowers, returned by the same messenger? Miss Lufton was as good as her word, and never spoke to Lord Dumbello afterwards. How, after nursing his sorrows for a fortnight, he returned to the consolations of the variety stage, and what difficulty Lady Hartletop had in rescuing him from those entanglements, it is no duty of the present chronicler to record. Suffice it to say that Lord Dumbello is still a bachelor, while Miss Lufton has grown older, and made a very suitable marriage by all accounts.

Nevertheless, Mr. Bunce persists in attributing the breaking-off of the engagement to the machinations of Father Smith. Since the War, he says, there's no holding them Papists. May he long retain his velvet gown, and Mr. Easyman the enjoyment of his prebend.

## VI

### SEPTIMUS ARABIN'S WARDENSHIP

THE epic cycle of the ancients begins, we are told, with the egg of Leda. That the epic cycle of Bassetshire begins with the Wardenship of Hiram's Hospital, cannot reasonably be doubted by anyone who is familiar with the course of it. If John Bold had not questioned Mr. Harding's right to the enjoyment of the salary which he drew as Warden, can we be certain that Eleanor Harding would have thrown herself away on him? For indeed he had little to recommend him, except the dire necessity of that Iphigenia's sacrifice. If there had been no Widow Bold with a thousand a year, would Mr. Slope have gone a-courting, and would he have quarrelled with his patroness over the Hospital succession? Nay, would there have been such wraths in the celestial bosoms of Mrs. Proudie and Archdeacon Grantley, if the frail bark of Mr. Harding's fortunes had not been tossing on the sea of diocesan controversy? But for such wraths, would there have been any need to bring the Reverend Francis Arabin into the diocese, to be the champion of orthodoxy? And but for the running made by Mr. Slope (if I may be pardoned for the use of so mundane an expression),

is it certain that the signora would have encouraged Mr. Arabin to propose marriage, or that he would have acceded to that suggestion? And if Eleanor had not married Mr. Arabin, there would have been no extra twenty pounds smuggled into the parcel which was handed to Mr. Crawley; and in that case the course of true love might have run smoothly between Grace Crawley and Major Grantley, instead of occupying two volumes.

I say, then, that the Hospital Wardenship was the Leda's egg of the Barsestshire cycle; and since a true cycle must ever return upon itself (as the rain that fills our rivers is itself sucked up from the sea into which our rivers run), to the Hospital Wardenship the story of Barchester must at last return. Indeed, many readers before now must have lifted their eyebrows over the singular omission by which my Author fails to give us any information about the fate of the Hospital, when it had passed into the hands of Mr. Quiverful. "Here in their new abode," he says, "we will leave Mr. and Mrs. Quiverful and their fourteen children. May they enjoy the good things which Providence has at length given to them!" After which, if my memory serves me, we hear nothing about the five remaining bedesmen, except that John Bunce, the uncle of my friend the verger, was present at Mr. Harding's funeral, and died himself a fortnight later. What of the others? we ask. Were fresh bedesmen appointed in their places? And if so, did none of them follow their ex-Warden to

the grave? The fortunes of the Quiverful family must certainly not be passed over in silence.

It is a proverb as old as proverb-making, that no man was ever yet satisfied by the granting of his prayers. It will be remembered that, after Mr. Harding's resignation, the salary attached to the post of Warden had been cut down; in future, the Warden was to receive £450 a year for looking after twelve old men, and a matron was to be appointed, with a salary of £70 a year, to look after twelve old women. While Mrs. Proudie was still alive, and powerful to protect him, Mr. Quiverful took one obvious precaution—he saw to it that Mrs. Quiverful was installed in the position of matron. And now, it will be supposed, the Quiverful family were at an end of all their troubles. They had £520 a year between them, and their duties were entirely nominal; for it will be obvious to all readers of Barsetshire history that, though the Bishop, the Dean, and the Warden had power to elect bedesmen by turns, they very seldom did. As the old bedesmen died off, nobody seems to have taken the trouble to replace them; and as for the old women, I can find no evidence that they were ever elected at all. So Mr. Quiverful's duties were light; and he had, besides, a very pleasant and spacious building for his fourteen children to run about in. Furthermore, I am sorry to say that Mr. Quiverful remained incumbent of Puddingdale; and though the remuneration which he gave to his curate was considerably in

excess of the fifty pounds a year which Mrs. Proudie offered to Mr. Slope on condition of his accepting that preferment, it left a comfortable margin.

Nevertheless, Mr. Quiverful was not content. He complained that his house was too large, and that its upkeep was a constant drain upon his purse. And here Mr. Quiverful was ahead of his time; for in these days anybody who has a large house is continually complaining of it as a burden—the rates and taxes, the repairs, the insurance, you would hardly believe what it all comes to; as if they would be living much more contentedly under a hedgerow. In the 'sixties, people still regarded living in a large house as a blessing bestowed upon them by Providence; but not Mr. Quiverful. He complained of the size of his house; and he also complained that Barchester was too far away from London and from civilisation generally, so that it was impossible for him to obtain schooling for his family unless he would pay ruinous bills for railway fares.

Mr. Quiverful did complain, but he did not allow his circumstances to daunt him. He continued to educate his own children himself—that is, the eight or nine of them who were still of suitable age for the process; for those were days in which most clergymen had received a good grounding in the classics; and although I doubt whether Mr. Quiverful taught his daughters Pindar, as Mr. Crawley taught his in the Hoggstock parsonage, he was nevertheless a clever instructor. So much

so, that before long Mrs. Quiverful hit upon an idea which was to be fruitful in its results. "I've been thinking, Q.," she said, "why you shouldn't arrange to get in some of the children from round about, and let them do their lessons with ours? It wouldn't mean much more work for you, and it would be something towards the household bills." At which words from his spouse Mr. Quiverful became very thoughtful, but shewed no immoderate excitement over the idea; for as Warden of the Hospital he found it necessary to stand more on his dignity in the home than he had ever done at Puddingdale. He hummed and ha'd and said he didn't think it would do; he was not paid to be an usher to his neighbours' children—which was true enough; but then he was paid four hundred and fifty pounds a year for looking after twelve old bedesmen who weren't there. In the end, Mrs. Quiverful triumphed as usual. At first there were only one or two boys and girls from their own circle, that is to say from the Low Church party in the city; but when it came to be known that little Johnny Sievehead had repeated all the gender rhymes without a mistake, and that Letty Lowbrow had mastered her Catechism before she was turned seven, a more general interest was excited. Before long others had been entrusted to Mr. Quiverful's care, Miss Green and Master Grey and the twin daughters of the burly chancellor; and at last the Deanery itself gave in, and you might see little Posy Arabin making her way across the Close

morning after morning, to unpack her satchel at Hiram's Hospital.

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I must not weary the reader with a full account of the school—for such it had now become—and of its fortunes. Suffice it to say that when Mr. Quiverful resigned his Wardenship in 1884 it had come to be regarded as an educational post; and Bishop Deadletter was universally applauded when he settled upon Dr. Whackem as the best incumbent for the office. Dr. Whackem had already been an usher at Chiltern Academy, and under his guidance the development of the school proceeded apace. It was soon after his appointment that the citizens of Barchester began to wonder what had become of John Hiram's legacy, and to demand the appointment of bedesmen and bedeswomen. For the rows of small houses which had been erected in the 'forties upon Hiram's Butts and Hiram's Patch had now been pulled down, to make way for more elegant and sanitary residences, with the result that the value of their rentals was greatly increased; and of this increase the citizens of Barchester claimed that they were getting no profit. Dr. Whackem was for resigning his post there and then; but Bishop Samuel Grantley, who had newly succeeded, overcame his scruples without much difficulty. He pointed out that if we took a narrowly legalistic view of ancient bequests, we should have to revise our institutions

wholesale. Were not the annual lectures upon New Testament Criticism in the Cathedral Library provided for by a fund originally designed to have Popish masses said for the soul of a crusading knight; and was not Mrs. Podgens, who cleaned the pews on Friday afternoons, paid out of an allowance which had formerly kept a lamp burning in front of a statue of the Virgin? He added that "the old order changeth, yielding place to new, and God fulfils himself in many ways, lest one good custom should corrupt the world." Let Dr. Whackem have faith, and Providence would justify his confidence in its own good time.

And so indeed it proved, although it was whispered by the irreverent that Providence would have made better time if the legal affairs of the school had not been committed to the care of Messrs. Slow and Bideawhile. Such was Bishop Grantley's prestige in the town, that the whole question was decided by a friendly action at law, in which Sir Abraham Haphazard gave his very remarkable decision upon the doctrine of *cy pres*. The legacy, he held, having been originally intended for woolcarders, and there being no longer any woolcarders in Barchester, the Hospital as an almshouse might be regarded as having fallen into desuetude; and the existing state of affairs might continue, so long as the general interests of Barchester did not suffer thereby. A lump sum was therefore handed over to the town council, who built therewith the very ugly poorhouse that stands



on the road to Boxall Hill and Greshamsbury; and Dr. Whackem was established in his wardenship. It was soon after this that he decided to take no more female pupils, since their presence rendered the maintaining of discipline more difficult; he also encouraged the boys to continue their schooling until a later age, and thus Hiram's Hospital became known, by the end of the century, as one of the great public schools of England. The school buildings spread right over the meadow that lies across the river from the Deanery; and a new swimming-bath was installed to commemorate the names of Old Hiramites who had held commissions in the South African War.

Nevertheless, it was not until the days of Dr. Wheedlem that Hiram's Hospital achieved the full measure of its prosperity. For Dr. Whackem was a teacher of the old school, with a great love for gerunds and supines, and quite content that his charges should bathe under a cold tap, or eat dry bread for their supper, as long as those gerunds and supines were well and truly learned. But Dr. Wheedlem was an educationalist; by which I mean that he had written several books about education; that he was for introducing more geography and English literature into the school curriculum; and that he was for tempering the wind to the shorn lamb by the institution of larger meals, more frequent holidays, and more room to idle in, to sleep in, and to wash in. So that parents who had been frightened by the Draconic

reputation of Dr. Whackem had less fears for the health of their sons under the management of his successor, who to tell the truth was rather inclined to cosset them. I need not add that by now the numbers of the school had risen to several hundreds, with three dozen masters or more to look after them, and much paraphernalia of gymnasiums, natural history museums, and carpentering shops, to prevent that idleness which affords such opportunities, they tell us, to the Enemy of souls.

This was the state of affairs when, soon after the War, Dr. Wheedlem was rewarded for his long and arduous labours at the Hospital by being preferred to a bishopric. And now an anxious controversy arose over the appointment of his successor. Under the will of John Hiram, it will be remembered, the Warden was appointed by the Bishop, but the precentor of the Cathedral for the time being had the option of being also Warden if the Bishop approved. In practice, the two appointments were made together, until the day when Bishop Proudie, or perhaps we ought rather to say when Mrs. Proudie, gave the hospital to Mr. Quiverful, although Mr. Harding was precentor. But the clerical tradition persisted, for Dr. Whackem and Dr. Wheedlem were both clergymen; and it was commonly assumed that laymen were ineligible for the post. This, however, was not the fact; and at the time of which I am speaking a clerical successor to Dr. Wheedlem

seemed difficult to come by. Be the reason what it may, far fewer schoolmasters take orders in these days than formerly; and it happened just then that of those few none could boast any particular eminence. Waiving the clerical prerogative—which is never a very safe thing to do in Barchester—nobody had any doubt who was the right man. Every consideration called for Mr. Septimus Arabin, fellow of Lazarus College in Oxford. He was an old boy, he came of a family well-known in Barchester, he was a scholar much talked of—but he was not a clergyman.

Bishop Goodenough, indeed, sounded Mr. Arabin privately as to whether he wished to be ordained after all; but Mr. Arabin, with a wry smile, said he thought it would hardly look well at the present juncture. It must not be supposed that the Bishop still had the appointment himself; the Hospital had of course by now a Governing Body; but among these the Bishop's word carried great weight. The aforesaid Governing Body met behind closed doors, and the voting recorded was secret; it is not, therefore, for profane eyes to peep into those mysteries, nor shall the reader hear from me what opinions Lord Muddlehead expressed upon that occasion, or which candidate's name was inscribed upon a half-sheet of note-paper by Sir Thingummy Bob. All I am at liberty to say is that, after a very long session the Governors did at last make up their minds; and that their choice fell,

his laymanship notwithstanding, on Mr. Septimus Arabin.

Since we are much concerned with this gentleman in our present chapter, I hope I shall be pardoned if I describe him with some particularity. He was the grandson of that Dean Arabin who was brought into the Barchester diocese to combat the Low Church proclivities of Mr. Slope; the grandson, therefore, of old Mrs. Arabin, whom I have mentioned in my last chapter—she was dead, however, at the time with which this chapter is concerned. His father, Mr. Lucius Arabin, was a clergyman of no very notable endowments, who lived highly respected as Vicar of Eiderdown. As not infrequently seems to happen in such cases, the talents of the Dean had descended to the grandson rather than to the son; from his grandfather, too, Septimus Arabin may have inherited an overconscientious, almost scrupulous turn of mind, which shews itself in the sequel. I do not know that his character owed any debt to his great-grandfather, after whom he was named, the Reverend Septimus Harding; but from his grandmother Eleanor I think he did derive a certain independence of judgment, a certain fearlessness in opposing the world's judgments, with which we shall become equally familiar. His school-days were spent at Hiram's, of which his father had been an early pupil; and from there he won a scholarship at his grandfather's College of Lazarus, which led in time to a fellowship. He

was but forty years of age when he was elected to the wardenship. In person, he was spare and slight; what impressed those who met him was the smile which lit up his eyes under their bushy brows when he was suddenly amused—as often as not, by some humorous reflection which was not perceived by his interlocutor.

Bishop Goodenough's suggestion alluded to above, that Mr. Arabin might see fit to take holy orders, was not made for the first time. The same idea had been put into his mind when he took his degree, by the Master of Lazarus himself. It was necessary for the College to appoint a new Chaplain, and Mr. Arabin seemed fitted for the post; he had been a seriously-minded undergraduate, giving evidence of personal piety, and being known as the promoter of several useful institutions. He replied that he would consider the possibility, and went off, in his conscientious way, to read through the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion. He was warned that it was unusual, in these days, for a clergyman to find himself in complete agreement with that formula; the assent which would be demanded of him at his ordination would be understood as applying to their general sense, rather than to their expressions in detail. But the effect of this advice was unfortunate; Mr. Arabin declared that it was precisely the general sense of the Articles which gave him pause. Their atmosphere, he said, was something wholly foreign to his thought; they were mainly occupied with a theology of grace

in which he found it impossible to believe. As for original sin, he doubted whether he could accept it at all; or if he did so, it could be only in the sense condemned as Pelagian. Nor did the representations of several friends, including one well-known bishop, suffice to overcome his scruples on the point.

A layman, therefore, Mr. Arabin remained; but he was elected a Fellow of his College notwithstanding. His views were regarded as somewhat dangerously liberal in that institution, which has retained even in these modern times its reputation for a kind of crusted orthodoxy, in University matters especially. But such was his application to his studies, and his influence over his pupils, that his colleagues proclaimed him a paragon among tutors, like his grandfather before him. Nor, when he came to Hiram's Hospital as Warden, did he belie this reputation. The school flourished more than ever under his rule; the masters, even the most elderly of them, were contented, and parents accounted themselves lucky if they found a vacancy for young Tommy or little Fred. True, there were those among the Cathedral clergy who shook their heads a little over his theology; for Mr. Arabin not only taught divinity, but preached in the school chapel in his master's gown and hood. Dr. Awmbry complained that his teaching was not definite enough, and Mr. Scorchem that he allowed the senior boys to play racquets on Sundays, to the manifest peril of their souls. But in general

the world spoke well of Mr. Arabin, and Mr. Arabin deserved it.

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And now I am afraid that the reader, with his memories of the last chapter still fresh, will protest his weariness when I announce the approach of another centenary celebration. But indeed we live in a centenarian age, when we are so little proud of our own performances that we willingly spend much of our time in celebrating the exploits of our great-grandfathers. Nor am I to blame in this case; for it is written on the second page of those old chronicles of Bassetshire that John Hiram died in the year of grace 1434; and it was not likely that such an anniversary should go unremarked; more especially now that the hospital had turned into a school, with a staff of three dozen masters and more, chiefly men of superabundant patriotism. I say then that the five hundredth anniversary of John Hiram was celebrated at the Hospital and in Barchester generally; and that in spite of a controversy which threatened to break up the committee altogether, on the subject of Latin numerals—some maintaining that quincenary was a common English word, while the opposite camp invoked Roby and Kennedy in favour of quingentenary. It was upon this occasion that one of the masters, a son of old Bishop Duggin, wrote what is now the official school song, the refrain of which we may be permitted to quote,

as summing up admirably the inspiration of the whole:

So let this be the creed of our Barchester breed,  
That changes, we do not desire 'em;  
Though fashions may alter, and loyalties falter,  
We'll stick to the paths of John Hiram.

Mr. Bunce, who is no friend to the Hospital under its present management—I think he hoped to succeed his old uncle as one of the inmates, and he certainly deserves to—says that this is all very well, but the refrain ought to have been sung by a chorus of superannuated wool-carders. No doubt, though, that the young gentlemen do the music, which is of a *fortissimo* kind, better justice.

Mr. Arabin himself took little part in the deliberations of the Committee, which began its meetings in the autumn of 1933. He was a retiring man, and disliked the promise of notoriety which the centenary brought with it. He interfered with the deliberations only to veto suggestions which he thought unsuitable; as, that a group of statuary, representing Mr. and Mrs. Quiverful with their fourteen children, should be erected in the courtyard, in that very position from which Archdeacon Grantley once addressed Mr. Harding's bedesmen. Mr. Arabin observed that, though the proposed group might be of value in encouraging parents to be good patrons of the school, it would challenge unfavourable comparison with the Niobids. Nor



was he any better pleased at the alternative suggestion that he himself should occupy that position, holding his hand on a boy's head. It would be better, he suggested, that Dr. Whackem should appear instead of himself, and that the poses of the two figures should be revised to suit his predecessor's notorious characteristics. Then he added, in a slightly more serious tone, that if they wanted to commemorate the present glories of Hiram's Hospital, they could not do better than erect a statue of Miss Stanhope. Now Miss Stanhope was his, or rather the school's, secretary; and she was possessed of that unerring memory, that imperturbable efficiency, which only the female sex can achieve, when it takes to doing office-work—so that people have wondered before now whether we should not be a great deal happier if all the organising work in the world were done by women; and they may well be in the right of it. And nobody was surprised when Mr. Arabin, to cover his own blushes, suggested that Miss Stanhope should be honoured with a statue instead.

But the Barchester world did feel that Mr. Arabin had gone too far, both in his habit of self-effacement and in his admiration of the school secretary, when, after the Christmas vacation, he returned as a married man, and she returned as Mrs. Arabin. He had sent round a circular to the masters—or possibly she had sent it round, but that was all one now—informing them of the step he proposed taking, and explaining that he

preferred the wedding to be quite quiet; he hoped (or she hoped) that nobody would take it amiss. Now, Mr. Arabin as a bachelor had been a very eligible bachelor, and I would not like to say that no ladies in Barchester had been, in the old phrase, setting their caps at him. For, although ladies no longer wear caps, it is held by some who profess to be well-informed in the matter that the process or attitude of cap-setting has by no means become extinct; certainly not in Cathedral towns like Barchester, where there are always a good few maiden ladies living in the neighbourhood of the close, who have not quite made up their minds whether they intend to persevere in that state. And there were people ill-natured enough to express surprise that Miss Clantam should be so indefatigable in her attendance at the school concerts, although she had not a note of music; or that the widowed Mrs. Evergreen should find it interesting to watch the school football matches, when she had no notion what was the difference between a scrimmage and a goal-post. These things were said, as they always will be said so long as there are eligible bachelors and maiden ladies; but with the truth or falsehood of these insinuations we are in no wise concerned.

What the world of Barchester resented—that is to say, what the world of Barchester Close resented—was the suddenness of it all, and perhaps, too, the secrecy. For the Barchester ladies are fond of going to weddings, and regard them as having only

a shadowy sort of validity if they are not solemnised in the Cathedral itself—which view, I need hardly say, is cordially shared by Mr. Albert Bunce. Never does my old friend appear in greater glory than when he unhooks the red ropes to admit, now the bride's friends, now the bridegroom's, into their seats, or clears the way afterwards for the procession down the aisle. Mr. Bunce is getting old, and he is apt to doze a little while ceremonies are being performed. But at the words "with any amazement" he springs to his feet, and becomes a model of kindly efficiency; you would think it was Father Time himself, smiling to see two more of his progeny linked in matrimony. All this familiar parade Mr. Arabin had escaped, by having his wedding celebrated obscurely in London—some said, at a registry office.

And he had escaped also that period of public betrothal which is frequently so embarrassing to the two people principally concerned, but a source of so much interesting speculation among their neighbours. The Barchester ladies like long engagements, so that they may have plenty of time to exclaim over the suitability of the marriage, to declare they always felt certain it would happen, and to wonder whether it will happen after all. I am not sure that this last is not the best part of the whole performance. Who shall deny that Mrs. Proudie felt some thrill, I will not say of pleasure but of righteous gratification, when the news was brought to her that Lord Dumbello had gone off

to Paris? And when that grandson of his, whose fortunes we have been following in the last chapter, was thrown over by Miss Lufton, you may be sure that the Barchester teatable was livelier for a month afterwards. Man or woman who announces the fact of a betrothal only when the knot has been tied, and the cake already cut, is like a conjurer who should bring bouquets and rabbits out of his top-hat without passing it round to let us see that it is empty. As Mrs. Green said to Mrs. Grey, "It's not that one minds about the banns, but one does like to see the wedding-presents."

Besides, who was Miss Stanhope? Except that she had lived mostly abroad, nobody knew anything about her. She did not belong to Barchester, they complained. And yet, had they known it, Miss Stanhope belonged to Barchester more than any of them. They did not know it, because the memory of a clerical society is very short. The dignitaries of Barchester are not rooted in the soil, they come and go hither and thither; if you want to find long memories, you must go amongst the poor, and especially those who live in the country. Miss Stanhope's father had been Ethelbert Stanhope, the sculptor; he had married in late middle age, and his only daughter was born when he was already turning old. She was thirty-five when she came to Barchester to act as Mr. Arabin's secretary, and over forty when she married him. Thus, when she came to Barchester, the very name of Stanhope had been forgotten by everyone in Cathedral

Society; the last to remember her had been a very old woman—Mr. Arabin's grandmother. Eleanor Arabin had good cause to remember the Stanhope family; she could still look back to the day when Bertie himself made such halfhearted love to her at Miss Thorne's Fête Champêtre, when Dr. Vesey Stanhope was still a prebendary of Barchester, and rector not only of Crabtree Canonis corum, but of Eiderdown with Stoke Pinguium. She had known Charlotte Stanhope, mistaking her for a friend; she had known Madeline Neroni, mistaking her for a rival. Eleanor Arabin it was who, when very near her death, induced her grandson to appoint that extremely efficient secretary—not because she was so efficient, but because she was in need of work. "She has had a difficult life," said the kindly old lady, and "I would like you to do something for her." But I do not think she meant that Septimus Arabin was to lead her to the altar.

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However, it was no use attempting to criticise Mr. Arabin; so high did his reputation stand in Barchester, especially with the halo of the quingentenary (or possibly quincenatenary) hovering about his distinguished head. The great day fell early in the summer term, most fortunately for all parties concerned. A centenary is difficult to celebrate in winter or spring, when elderly folk are apt to take

chills; nor does it come well later on in the summer, for it interferes with the examinations. John Hiram, the honest man, died just at the end of May, although he can hardly have foreseen the benefit he was conferring thereby on his academic posterity. The whole of Barchester was on the tiptoe of expectation; nor was it in Barssetshire alone that the fame of the Hospital was on men's lips. A day or two before the actual date, the *Jupiter* devoted the right-hand column of its right-hand middle page to a commemoration of John Hiram and his benefactions; which was the more significant, because there was considerable pressure on the pages of the *Jupiter* at the moment, owing to a correspondence that had broken out on the right way to pronounce the word "laboratory." And in this column, you may be sure, mention was not wanting of Mr. Arabin, nor of his predecessors Dr. Whackem and Dr. Wheedlem; although the part played in the development of the school by Mr. and Mrs. Quiverful was somewhat slurred over, for fear of suggesting an element of discontinuity in the history of the institution.

"It is not often," wrote the anonymous gentleman who contributed this article, "that one of our great national institutions can face the prospect of its sixth century with the consciousness of undiminished vigour. We English are notoriously a Conservative people, but we are more careful to maintain the spirit than the letter of our traditions. A superficial critic will often suspect innovation,

where in truth there has been nothing but steady development on sound lines. All the more gratefully, then, do we take the opportunity of calling attention to an instance in which the fair flowers of latter-day progress manifestly burgeon upon the stock of immemorial antiquity. It is probably true to say that no other nation has the instinct of orderly progress, of 'freedom slowly broadening down from precedent to precedent,' which could have produced a history like that of HIRAM'S HOSPITAL. Framed in the spacious setting of the early fifteenth century, before the Wars of the Roses and the sweating sickness had taken such a toll of our English manhood, the figure of the sturdy old Barchester yeoman holds out its hand to us across the centuries, encouraging us to fulfil the aspirations of an older day in conformity with the requirements of the present. No doubt the twelve old woolcarders for whose benefit the original charity was bequeathed would rub their eyes if they could come back to modern Barchester, and find the retired walks in which they spent their old age noisy with the shouts of the rising generation; their quaint, gabled rooms devoted to preparing a fresh consignment of English boyhood for the sterner battles of life. But we have learned, in these days, to build for the future instead of casting back regretful eyes towards the past. It is youth's turn now; and it is but fitting that our young men should see visions, where formerly the old men dreamed dreams. A great

public school is a national inheritance. And where a great public school has its energies directed by a man who is sensitive to the larger needs and the more dazzling opportunities of our day, the benefit conferred upon the Imperial type is incalculable. HIRAM'S HOSPITAL, better known to the world by the simple name of BARCHESTER, has found such a man in MR. ARABIN." And so the article proceeded, in a vein of warm appreciation, which would have been less surprising to the readers of the *Jupiter* if they could have known that it came from the pen of Mr. Hatband, at once the founder and the president of the Old Hiramites' Association.

Oh, Tom Towers, Tom Towers, were they after all "writ sarcastic," those tributes paid in the older chronicles to the mighty influence, to the reforming zeal, of the *Jupiter*? Or has lethargy overtaken thee, and dost thou lie in the hollows of Olympus, obnubilating thyself as of old with the fog of thy own eloquence? Two generations back, it seems, the *Jupiter* could launch attacks upon the powers that were, and make them tremble; if Tom Towers said there would be a dissolution, members of Parliament hurried back to their constituencies to canvass. Nor did he disclaim spiritual jurisdiction; he would urge upon the Prime Minister the duty of appointing his own candidate to a vacant deanery, though that candidate were Obadiah Slope; and if a newly-appointed prebendary had the misfortune to see the bailiffs in his house, loudly



did Tom Towers demand that the offending prebendary should resign his benefice. Above all, in the matter of Hiram's Hospital the same anonymous gentleman pilloried the unfortunate Mr. Harding, and taxed him with eating the bread of idleness in usurped splendour, because he only allowed his bedesmen twopence a day in excess of the dole that was legally theirs; so that Mr. Harding, in the mildness of his nature, gave up the appointment and took lodgings for himself in the High Street.

Now, although the same pontifical aura hangs over its pronouncements, do not those pronouncements reflect, day after day, the sentiments of the party in power? Is not the *Jupiter* content to announce appointments, and to congratulate the Government upon them, instead of dictating candidates of its own choice? And if sometimes it foreshadows the course of political events, do we any longer superstitiously mistake the lightnings emitted by Tom Towers for the cause of those Governmental thunders? Above all, where the Church is concerned, are we not accustomed to read smooth words in the columns of the *Jupiter*, a long series of blessings and congratulations after the manner of Balaam the son of Beor? Certainly in this matter of Hiram's Hospital the thunders were laid by, and the wrongs of those twelve bedesmen were no more kept in remembrance. Had not Hiram's Hospital become a national institution? And was not the *Jupiter* a national institution too?

And what of Dr. Pessimist Anticant, whose writing was so curiously reminiscent of Thomas Carlyle; and of Mr. Popular Sentiment, who sounded so like Charles Dickens? For these two, it will be remembered, wrote about the wrongs of Hiram's bedesmen in their time. Alas, they are dead, and they have left no successors behind them. True, an American journalist did ask Mr. Positive Paradox whether he thought John Hiram's will was being properly carried out, and got the reply that an almshouse was the only proper environment for such an effete type as the modern public schoolboy; but then Mr. Paradox has been saying that kind of thing for forty years, and use has blunted the edge of it. As for Mr. Millennium Whileyouwait, he was so impressed with the new science buildings lately erected at the school, that he let it off with a sort of mild benediction. Meanwhile, the gossip-writers were busy over the personality of Mr. Arabin, for our modern public loves the personal touch; and they all managed to write enough on the subject to make it clear that they themselves had been at Oxford, though to tell the truth they could find very little to say about their hero—except one of them, who confused him with Mr. Horrabin of Simon Magus, a young gentleman who had been rusticated shortly before for burning down the cabmen's shelter in Broad Street.

As for the day itself, and the celebrations in Barchester, and the important people who attended

them, I do not know that this occasion differed much from many similar occasions. There was a great service in the Cathedral, at which Bishop Goodenough preached; he took his text from the words "He, being dead, yet speaketh," neglecting (as preachers are apt to do) to remind his audience that they refer to Abel's blood crying for vengeance. *Harding's Church Music* was used throughout the service, which was a gracious compliment to the shades of the old Warden. And there was a great luncheon spread for the guests in the school hall, at which the beards wagged merrily; and there were speeches afterwards, which were transmitted by wireless telegraphy to the young gentlemen, who were assembled for the purpose in their house dining-rooms—doubtless to their great satisfaction; and if one of them did interfere with the apparatus by throwing a large piece of bread at it, this was put down to the high spirits which such an occasion naturally engenders, and the offence was overlooked. I do not know that any of the speakers alluded to the twelve old woolcarders who were the first Hiramites, except Sir Thingummy Bob, who said that when he was in the school there was no woolcarding done, but a precious lot of woolgathering—a pleasantry which was explained, during the laughter that followed, to Lord Muddlehead, who pronounced it to be deuced good.

Lord Muddlehead himself was held to have made the speech of the afternoon. Boys, he was under

stood to say, were not much different from when he was a boy. People said they were different, but he didn't think they were. Certainly Barchester boys weren't much different from when he was a Barchester boy, under old Whackem. Of course, there had been a lot of changes; you must have changes; changes were a good thing. It didn't matter how many changes you had in a school as long as the traditions of the school remained what they always had been. He believed that the tradition of Barchester remained what it always had been—the tradition of English gentlemen; and you couldn't find a finer tradition than that, all the world over. The great thing about a place like Barchester was that boys learned to pull together. He believed that if the members of the Government would only pull together like Barchester boys did, there would be much less of this unemployment and Bolshevism about. They were there to celebrate the quincenary of Hiram's Hospital. It wasn't given to every school to celebrate its quincenary like that. And he believed that, if the name of Barchester stood high in the world's estimation, as he believed it did, that was because Barchester had traditions behind it; fine old English traditions going back to the days of Henry the Eighth—eh? what was that?—Henry the Sixth. So he was very happy to give them the toast, *In piram memoriam Joannis Hiram*; and since John Hiram wasn't there to answer for himself, he, Lord Muddlehead, was going to

ask the Headmaster, Mr. Arabin, to answer that toast; because he didn't believe you could find a better living example of the Barchester spirit than you would find in the headmaster, all the world over. This speech, which is here given only in the briefest summary, was fully reported in the Press, and formed the subject of a leading article in more than one of our daily journals.

Mr. Arabin's speech was an exceedingly modest one. He described himself as a blush-conductor, whose office it was to attract all the compliments flying about, lest they should prove too embarrassing for the assistant masters, to whom they properly belonged. As for the boys, he hoped they would all remember the sacrifice which their parents had made to send them to a school where so much provision was made for them. Boys nowadays thought of their school as an Alma Mater, rather than as a cruel step-mother; but this fact would be regrettable, if it meant that they ceased to regard their homes as the first and most necessary centre of their loyalties. In short, it was rather a dull performance, and the reporters did not waste much of their pencils over it. As Mrs. Green said to Mrs. Grey, Dr. Wheedlem would not have forgotten, in such circumstances, to mention the Rugby Football fifteen.

But all day Mr. Arabin moved about to the accompaniment of that muffled applause which reminds a headmaster that his boys have learned

the lesson of not being too enthusiastic; and what better do we demand of them?

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It was about this time that the townspeople of Barchester determined to abolish the slums. For you must know that Barchester, although its quaint and crooked old streets are the delight of the artist and the antiquarian, does contain, at the back of those streets, certain courts, yards, alleys, rows and tenements which are even quainter and crookeder, although nobody, except the people who live there, would account them fit to live in. In the old days before the War, these landmarks of the past were very rapidly disappearing; not from any righteous reforming zeal, but because the landlords who owned the ground rents found it more profitable to pull them down, and replace them with large shops and offices. Indeed, we have seen that the modern prosperity of the Hospital dates, in part, from the pulling down of those unsavoury rookeries which once occupied the sites known as Hiram's Butts and Hiram's Patch. But, when the War was over, this process was most unseasonably arrested; the Government of the time insisting that it was better for men and women to live in rookeries than in the street, and forbidding the landlords to pull down any more of them except where there was alternative accommodation for the tenants, which there seldom was.

Then came the days when the Gods were overthrown by the Titans; and not by those old Titans to whose grumblings and growlings we were so long accustomed, who, when they assumed office, were not easy to distinguish from the Gods they had dethroned, but a new set of Titans altogether, of the earth earthy, compared with whom Sir Roger Scatcherd himself might have passed for a true-blue patriot. Then rumours began to be heard of new taxes on the value of land, and the ownership of these undesirable properties became more undesirable than ever. So, when the cry came recently for the nation to demolish its slums, nowhere was it heard more enthusiastically than at Barchester; nowhere was it more readily answered. The landlords of the tenement houses, setting aside any sentimental attachment they may have had for these historic structures, were the first to clamour for their overthrow. Nor, in this, did they lack powerful allies. Barchester is but a step, as modern transit goes, from the manufacturing town of Hogglesstock, famous for its output of sanitary earthenware. And in recent years many Hogglesstockians who have grown rich by the exercise of that craft, and no longer find it necessary to live next door to their own factory chimneys, have migrated to Barchester, so that they can enjoy the amenities of the Cathedral Close. These gentlemen, sincerely distressed at the unemployment which had overtaken the unfortunate earthenware workers of Hogglesstock, were not slow to see that

a large scheme of public building works at Barchester would benefit the trade of their native city. Thus between the landlords who were anxious to see the old houses disappear, and the earthenware manufacturers who were anxious to see new houses rise, there was an edifying rivalry of Christian endeavour. Posters were fixed up all over the city, and a monster meeting convened in the Mechanics' Institute, to convince the doubters (if there were any) that this new advance of civilisation was necessary to the welfare of the town.

In the programme of this meeting, a very special attraction was included. It was first whispered, then positively asserted, that the Duke of Omnium would be there. This nobleman is, like his ancestors before him, the richest man in Barssetshire—and indeed, it cannot have failed to strike the reader's mind that, while the severe taxation of these modern times has left rich men poorer, and even very rich men rather poorer, it has left very very rich men just as rich as they were before; a fresh warning, if we needed one, that it is useless to interfere with the designs of Providence. The Duke of Omnium was rich, and his power in the county, though not quite what it had been, sufficient to make a flutter when his name was mentioned. And he had rarity value; Gatherum Castle in these days was almost always closed, except to sightseers, and the Duke spent most of his time at Continental watering-places, doing nothing in particular; he had, besides, a very fine collection of birds' eggs. It was quite



expected that Mr. Fothergill—for the Fothergills are still agents of the Gatherum property—would be there at the meeting; the Duke owned a considerable amount of property in Barchester itself, and it was but fitting that his representative should attend, to join in that general act of self-abnegation by which the Barchester landlords arrange to forgo their tenement rents. But when the Duke himself appeared on the platform, there was all manner of shouting and huzza'ing, for there is much feudal feeling left in Barchester. As Mrs. Grey said to Mrs. Green, blood will tell.

The Mechanics' Institute is still the largest hall in the town, and the appearance of it has not changed much since Harold Smith delivered his famous lecture there about the needs of the South Sea Islanders. The red baize cloth on the table may easily be the same on which that gentleman threw down his gloves, in vexation at the ill-timed jests of Nat Sowerby. Even the water in the carafe had a dusty look, as if it might have been left over on that occasion. It must be admitted that the speeches made on the great slum question were less pompous and more to the point than the lecture on the South Seas; for did not Bishop Goodenough himself take the platform? And did not he, in a rousing appeal, evoke the memory of John Hiram, asking the shade of that Barchester worthy what he thought of the way in which his fellow-citizens were housed? (Though indeed he forgot to mention that Hiram's Patch and Hiram's

Butts had once been the most sordid slums of any, and that the Hospital had done uncommonly well out of the sale of them.) But it is not of the meeting itself that I am here concerned to write; only of a brief but important interview which took place in the committee-room where the speakers were assembled beforehand.

The committee-room at the Mechanics' Institute does not differ greatly from other committee-rooms of its kind; that is to say, it is large and damp and draughty, and has very hard, knobby chairs drawn up against the wall, and an array of fire-buckets, and some pieces of scenery left over from the last performance by the Dramatic Club. There were, besides, portraits of all those who had been honorary presidents of the Institute, right back to Sir Roger Scatcherd, who stood there inviting the attention of the passer-by to the plan of a railway-embankment; only the artist had not quite caught a certain watery look about the eyes, a heightened colouring about certain of the features, which distinguished Sir Roger in life. Beneath this portrait stood the Bishop, making himself gracious to the company; the Dean was there, Dr. Letham Allcombe, and Lady Hartletop, and old Major Gresham, and Dr. Killgerm, and Mr. Reddypalm the mayor, and Archdeacon Awmbry from Plumstead Episcopi, and half a dozen others with them. To these the Duke was shewn in, a small man (he was descended, you must remember, not from the old Duke but from Planty Pal) with very light hair and glassy

eyes that goggled at you when you were being addressed; his dignity was lessened by a continual writhing motion of his shoulders, as if he were not quite sure whether the stud at the back of his shirt was still in position. He paused a little at the doorway, obviously disconcerted to find three strangers in gaiters, any one of whom might be the Bishop. But Mr. Fothergill, who was with him, put him straight over the difficulty; it is Mr. Fothergill's business to know such things.

"How d'ye do, sir? Quite a good crowd turning out, by the look of it. Hullo, Rosie," he added, as he caught sight of Lady Hartletop; and then fixed his gaze on Sir Roger Scatcherd's portrait, as if further conversational enterprise could hardly be expected of him.

The Bishop admitted that it was quite a good crowd, and went on to say (for he is an adept at improving the occasion ever so slightly) that in his opinion people would always come out on the side of righteousness if you gave them a lead. Upon which, as the Duke seemed to have no observation to make, the Archdeacon looked up quickly, with the air of a man who is half ashamed of expressing his deep feelings, and said "Leadership's what we want everywhere, my Lord." For Dr. Awmbry is a stickler for ecclesiastical correctness, and seized the opportunity to insist, tactfully, that bishops ought not to be addressed as "sir." This protest made, he went out to arrange chairs on the dais.

Now, the Duke of Omnium has never been a great man for "giving a lead" in the county of Barset. The judges, when they come round on assize, have dinner at Gatherum Castle; and when royalty is about, or the military manoeuvres are on, you will see the lights winking along its interminable corridors. But meetings and movements are not in the Duke's line; I doubt if he had visited the Mechanics' Institute above twice before; and he professes a lively horror of being "got at by the parsons." So he removed his gaze from the Scatcherd portrait, and said, turning to the Bishop again, "I hear the Hospital centenary went off well. Wonderful show, that."

"It's been a wonderful history," said the Bishop, "wonderful. They have a waiting-list, they say; and in these days, when so very few of the big schools aren't hit. But then, Arabin is a man in a thousand. I daresay your Grace has met him?"

"Odd, that," said the Duke. "I had a nephew there, you know, who used to bring his friends over to Gatherum; and I remember his house-master coming to see me when the young bouncer was caught roof-climbing." (Here the Bishop laughed gracefully, as much as to say that boys will be boys.) "But I never met the great Panjan-drums himself except once, when I was down at Cannes, wasn't it? That was the time when he first met poor little Nellie Stanhope, whom he's married since, they tell me. Rotten business, that."

The Bishop gasped. Beyond the fact that the Arabins had been married offstage, as it were, instead of facing the ladies of Barchester in full quire, he had no notion of any "rotten business" in connexion with his friend the headmaster. The Dean rose to the emergency more promptly; he saw at once that the reference must be to something in Mrs. Arabin's previous career—poverty, no doubt. So he said, "She has had a difficult time, I'm afraid"; and he shook his head in a melancholy way over the misfortunes he hoped to hear more about.

"Difficult!" repeated the Duke, as if bewildered by Dr. Allcombe's moderation of speech. "Why, he beat her for months."

The Bishop's mouth opened, and his eyebrows shot up, in an extreme of shocked incredulity. But the Dean was quicker off the mark; he perceived that there was another "he" to be reckoned with, and that Mr. Arabin was guiltless on this charge, however violently he might have dealt with the Duke's nephew. "I didn't know that," he explained. "Dear, dear; you're sure of it?"

"Beat her black and blue. Of course, I always thought he was a rotter. Not that I don't like Frenchmen myself; known some capital fellows. But this de Pontin was the limit; everybody admits that. However, she's well rid of him."

"I never heard a word about it," said the Bishop, suddenly stiffening. "Who is this person?"

"Oh, she divorced him. It's absolutely on the

square. Then Arabin met her, and she was his secretary for a while, they tell me; but one hadn't expected this. Still, people like a headmaster to be married, don't they? I say, Fothergill, have you found out where I'm to sit yet?"

. . . . .

According to those older chronicles, there was "a library or reading-room connecting the cathedral with the Dean's house. . . . The people of Barchester believed that it belonged to the Dean, and the clergymen of Barchester believed that it belonged to the chapter." It was here that, long ago, Archdeacon Grantley and the burly chancellor and the meagre prebendary, with others of their cloth, discussed who would succeed Dean Trefoil, while Dean Trefoil still struggled for his life next door. And it was here that the Cathedral clergy met, the day after that Housing Reform meeting at the Mechanics' Institute, to discuss what was to be done in view of the Duke of Omnium's disclosures overnight. Whether they were summoned with due formalities, or whether they flocked there by some common instinct, it is not for the profane historian to know. But there they were, all of them except the Bishop, who had been called up to London, and had left the Dean in possession of his views.

It was the Dean, then, who explained to the assembled company that the lady whom Mr. Arabin had married was not, as they had assumed from

the name she preferred to bear, a spinster; she had a husband living—a Frenchman who had treated her badly, whom she had divorced, but still. . . . What, if anything, could be done about it? There was silence for a few moments, and then, “Good heavens!” said the Archdeacon.

Now, when Archdeacon Grantley said “Good Heavens!” as he left the palace after his first interview with Dr. and Mrs. Proudie, it is on record that he raised his hat, and “smoke issued forth from the uplifted beaver as it were a cloud of wrath, and the safety-valve of his anger opened, and emitted a visible steam, preventing positive explosion and probable apoplexy.” We are further told that “all the ravens of the close cawed their assent. The old bells of the tower, in chiming the hour, echoed the words, and the swallows flying out from their nests mutely expressed a similar opinion.” But when Archdeacon Awmbry said “Good heavens!” there were no such convulsions of nature. For Archdeacon Awmbry will roar you as mildly as any sucking dove. He has a multitude of opinions, and these he holds honestly and sincerely enough; but it is not in his nature to express them loudly or provocatively; nor does he share his predecessor’s confidence that anyone who disagrees with those opinions is necessarily an infidel, beyond the pale of society or the hope of redemption. Therefore, when he said “Good heavens!” he said it with the awe-struck voice of a schoolboy who finds himself late for his morning

class; and bewilderment, not indignation, was uppermost in the tone he used. There was no positiveness in it, no joy of battle. Nevertheless, make use he did of that phrase, as of a consecrated hieratical formula. "Good heavens!" said the Archdeacon.

"I know," said the Dean. "It's the first time such a thing has happened in Barchester."

Oh, Dr. Allcombe, is it not the duty of thy decanal office—part of that duty, rather, when thou art not decorously rendering the Church service in thy high stall on the south side of the choir—to preserve the archives of thy Cathedral, and hand on to fresh generations of men the history of its dignitaries? The reader at least, more tenacious of memory, will not need to be told how, a matter of seventy years earlier, another lady of unfortunate matrimonial experience came to live in the close, she too an Englishwoman, she too a Stanhope. To be sure, it does not appear that Madeline had at that time divorced the Signor Neroni, nor yet that she contemplated remarriage. But the wiles of the signora and her unblushing flirtations even with the black coats of the chapter had been, in their time, a worse threat to the peace of Barchester Close than ever meek, sensible Mrs. Arabin could be—or, if you will, Madame de Pontin. But nobody remembered how Ethelbert Stanhope, Nellie Stanhope's father, had helped to wheel that siren-like sister of his into Mrs. Proudie's drawing-room; with what fatal results for Mr. Slope, and almost for a more innocent victim than



Mr. Slope, the future Dean Arabin. So, in a little time, shall we and all our works be forgotten.

If there is one member of the Barchester chapter who can always be trusted to take the least rigorous view of a situation, it is Mr. Easyman, who holds the very prebend once held by Mr. Vesey Stanhope. He now, almost reclining in an arm-chair, with his legs thrust well forward and his knees crossed, drew a long breath from his tobacco-pipe and expelled it slowly with a judicial air. "I suppose we would all rather this hadn't happened," he said. "But really, Dean, I can't quite see that it is any business of ours. Hiram's Hospital has its own governing body, and it's for them to say whether they think Arabin is a suitable man to be headmaster—or, in the alternative, whether they think a man like Arabin will frighten away the parents. If you're suggesting, as I suppose you must be suggesting, that we ought to put pressure on them to get rid of Arabin, I don't see that we can, and I don't see that it would be any business of ours if we could."

"That's all very well on paper," replied the Dean, shaking his head, "but in practice everybody knows the Bishop has a veto on the governing body, to all intents and purposes. Arabin's as near being a member of the chapter as a layman can be. And the governors are bound to look to us for a lead—that's how I see it."

"They *would* have a layman," said the precentor, almost gleefully. Oh, Mr. Precentor, was

it not whispered, when the appointment was vacant, that thou wouldst fain have been Warden thyself, like Mr. Harding before thee? But alas, there is less magic now in Benedicites and sonorous responses; and parents will have it that there are other qualifications for the instruction of youth.

It is whispered among the profane that Archdeacon Awmbry and Mr. Easyman never take the same side in a dispute. Certainly on this occasion the Archdeacon, his eyebrows still raised in scandalized bewilderment, took up the glove. "Hiram's is a church school," he pointed out. "You couldn't find a place that's been more identified with the Cathedral. And the Church has her laws about marriage; you may not like it, Easyman, but there they are. Arabin is committed to giving his boys Church teaching, and how is he to do it if his married life is a contradiction of Church teaching? I cannot understand how he accepts the situation; I always thought him a man of principle."

"Arabin beats his boys if he catches them playing cards," Mr. Easyman pointed out with a chuckle, "but he plays a very good hand at bridge himself. No, Archdeacon, we all understand your feelings about it, because we all know that you hold strong views. You may be right, but we don't all share them. The Dean here, for example, if I'm not mistaken, has publicly defended the remarriage of the innocent party in a divorce."

The Dean looked very much as we may suppose Gamaliel to have looked when St. Paul described

himself as a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee. He was not to be put off by this attempt to divide the ranks of orthodoxy. "No, no, Easyman, that's a totally different affair. I may have tried to get Church people to clear up their minds on a very difficult question; but what I've always said is, the Church hasn't spoken, and until she speaks we've no right to anticipate her decision. So long as her laws remain what they are, we've got to stick to them; and those who hold semi-ecclesiastical positions must be more careful than other people. By all means let Arabin follow his own conscience; but he oughtn't to forget that he's in a public position; that's my point." He trod out the embers of his cigarette, and looked up hopefully at Mr. Easyman, as if he were registering a hit.

"So that the boys at Hiram's will be brought up," retorted Mr. Easyman, with some asperity, "to believe that marriage is indissoluble, and that their mothers are mostly living in grievous sin. Later on, however, they will learn that this is no longer the case, because Dr. Allcombe has persuaded the Church of England to abolish all that. Upon my word, Dean, I admire your taste in humour. However, let us leave principle on one side, and stick to the practical or cat-belling part of the business. Is there any man in this room who can see a way in which we can actually deal with this scandal which (we are assured) has broken out in our midst?"

"Somebody might talk to Mr. Arabin," a minor canon suggested unexpectedly.

Mr. Easyman was a little taken aback. "Why, yes," he said, "that would be possible. But is there any man in this room who would like to talk to Mr. Arabin?"

"I suggest Mr. Easyman," said the minor canon, without taking his pipe out of his mouth.

Reader, watch that minor canon, and see if he be not destined for high preferment. Who taught him already, in these days of his sucking canonship, that greatest principle of ecclesiastical diplomacy, that you should always make the chief of the opposition president of the executive committee? In vain did Mr. Easyman protest that he was the wrong choice; his smile betrayed him. In vain did he assert his right to have a free hand in the business; to put the case before Mr. Arabin, without any advice or recommendations thereanent. Every member of the chapter knew that Mr. Easyman was now won over, and that his best efforts would be devoted to dislodging Mr. Arabin from his comfortable quarters at the Hospital. Oh, prudent minor canon, whom, if the Muse has any power of prophecy, the glories of an early mitre indubitably await!

. . . . .

I am glad to say that, for all the changes which have come over Hiram's Hospital in these last seventy years, the old part of the building remains

almost untouched. It was in the little quadrangle, with one side open on the river, that Mr. Easyman found the headmaster, after dinner, on the following evening; and they sat together on one of those very stone seats on which the bedesmen had sat, when Archdeacon Grantley represented to them the folly of expecting any increase in their pension, years before. The meadow on the opposite side of the river is now all covered over with science blocks and football grounds, and the shouts of the boys at play came across to them, echoed by the little stream, as they talked. But nothing has yet destroyed the peacefulness of Barchester on a summer evening; and Mr. Easyman's heart misgave him over the errand on which he had come. Was Mr. Arabin to give up all this, because Dr. Awmbry had scruples, and Dr. Allcombe went back on his own theories when the practice of them came in question?

Nevertheless, he stuck to his brief. And it is our opinion that a man will stick to his brief, no matter how much his heart misgives him over it, if he be spurred on by that most powerful of incentives, the consciousness that he is an important person, and others, qualified to judge, have done him the honour of choosing him to be their ambassador. "It's a nice place you've got here, Arabin," he said; and wished for the hundredth time that his task was easier.

"Yes," said Mr. Arabin, "I shall miss it. I'm leaving, you know," he added, without emotion.

Wild thoughts raced through Mr. Easyman's brain. Had rumours of that conference in the Cathedral library got round? Had the Bishop decided, after all, to act independently of the chapter? Or had Mr. Arabin himself—of course, that must be it—come to see that his marriage would make his position at the Hospital difficult? Anyhow, these speculations must remain unuttered. "Leaving?" he said. "You're not going to Chiltern?" For the headmastership of that famous academy was vacant, and Mr. Arabin's name had been mentioned in connexion with it.

"No," answered the other quietly, "I'm giving up schoolmastering."

"Mrs. Arabin doesn't like it?"

"Oh, no, it's nothing to do with her." Mr. Easyman was now hopelessly in the dark. "It's rather difficult to explain," Mr. Arabin went on, with a wry smile. "I suppose it's simplest to say that I'm giving it up because—well, because I'm not the right man for it."

"But, my dear fellow, you must allow other people to be judges of that! Look at the centenary celebrations; look at the article in the *Jupiter*! Modesty's all very well, but it's no good pretending you aren't a roaring success."

"Well, if you like, let's say that I'm too much of a success. What's the good of succeeding in doing something, when you're not sure that it's worth doing at all? That's the trouble. I'm helping to turn these boys into the sort of boys the governors

want them to be, the sort of boys their parents want them to be; granted. It's true the assistant masters have all the work to do, but I suppose I am responsible. Yes, we succeed in turning out the right kind of boy. The only question is, Does anybody want him?"

Mr. Easyman had picked up a twig, and was clearing away an obstruction in his tobacco-pipe; he made an excuse of this performance to be rather leisurely in his reply. At last he said. "Well, there's the type, you know—it's generally considered worth having. Stood the test of time, anyway." For Mr. Easyman has never been known to overstate his case.

"Oh yes, and the wool-carders stood the test of time, until they got superannuated, and had to finish up their days in the hospital here. But then, it's all right to have museum pieces at that end of life; the question is whether we want 'em at the other end, perfect specimens of a type that isn't needed any longer? Don't say we fit them for the Universities; all is grist that comes to their mill nowadays."

"Needed? I suppose we need men, and always shall do." (I am sorry to record Mr. Easyman's solecism of phrase; but he lives much in the new world, and the new world uses it.)

"You mean *leaders* of men, though, don't you? We used to provide a good education for a ruling class, if you like; but the ruling class doesn't rule nowadays. They used to become squires, but

squires can't live on their land. They became army officers, but what's the future for officers in an army which is either going to be mechanized or abolished? They used to take orders, but they won't now. There are still jobs in the Civil Service, but we are just writing off India, and Whitehall can't be expanded indefinitely. As I see it, we're all busy turning out capital chaps merely so that they can go round admiring each other's capital chappiness, in motor-garages and chewing-gum plantations."

"Yes, Lord knows there's a lot of that. But hang it all, it is still an asset; there are business jobs which always go to public school men, and they don't do so badly in Fleet Street."

"Fleet Street, yes; because they want gossip-writers. And of course there's always salesmanship; but when you come to think of it, what's salesmanship? We used to pride ourselves on turning out a set of men who would tell the truth and be reasonably honest; now we have to provide salesmen who will persuade people that they want expensive motor-cars when they don't. We might as well try to turn out gigolos."

"Oh, come, the thing isn't as skin-deep as all that. You don't really believe that the public schools ever existed merely to produce a manner; there was, and I should have thought there is, a kind of character which you get among public school men, which you won't find so easily elsewhere . . . trustworthiness, the sense of



responsibility, and all that. Lots of cant has been talked about it, but the thing's there, isn't it?"

"Oh, that's all right, if you can afford it; but can we? You wouldn't believe what a lot of parents I get, mostly old Barchester men, wanting the fees reduced. And what's the result? The boy gets brought up here in more comfort than he'll ever be able to afford afterwards; he starts on his career with a standard of living he can't really keep up. That's why, if they knew it, all the young men are discontented; and I ask myself whether this fine character you speak of is going to stand the strain of that discontentment. Will they keep the instinct of discipline, when they find themselves a disinherited class? Will they be honest, when they find the public school manner has no commercial value? Will they be moral, when they find they can't marry till they're forty? As it is, their religion goes, because it belongs to Barchester, not to the world outside Barchester. Cheerful companion for the youth, ain't I?"

"Well, I'm sorry. I think you're wrong, you know; but I'm not the man to argue with you. How long have you been feeling like this, if you don't mind my asking?"

"Since the centenary celebrations. It all came over me when Muddlehead was talking. . . . Well, there's no great harm done. They'll replace me easily enough; the show runs itself nowadays. It's very kind of you to argue, Easyman, with a pig-headed fellow like me."

"Oh, that's nothing," said Mr. Easyman. Nor did it occur to him till he was on his way home that he had spent the evening trying to do the exact opposite of what he had been commissioned to do.

Thus, some seventy years after Septimus Harding resigned the Wardenship of Hiram's Hospital, because he could not endure men's censure, did his great-grandson, Septimus Arabin, resign the same appointment because he could not endure their praise.

## EPILOGUE

THE last time I was in Barchester was in the summer of 1934, when the Cathedral Pilgrimage scheme was at its height, favoured by a broiling season and the "hiking" enthusiasm then in vogue. I was wearing my half-crown badge, like the other two dozen pilgrims who were to be seen in the Cathedral that morning; but Mr. Bunce recognized me, and buttonholed me for a chat instead of letting me be conducted personally round the fabric by Dr. Allcombe. And indeed, I knew almost every stone as well as the Dean himself.

Barchester has very few unemployed; and even the county has not been badly hit by economic conditions, though you may see a fair-sized retinue outside the Labour Exchange in Hogglestock. But, when once the Pilgrimage scheme was mooted among the authorities of the various Cathedral chapters, Dean Letham Allcombe laboured more abundantly than they all; this sort of thing was exactly his *métier*. Like many of his clerical brethren, he has a limited gift of facing realities; and he probably imagined that when the word "pilgrimage" was mentioned, the whole of twentieth-century England would betake itself to its knees.

He saw pilgrims coming from far and wide, with staves in their hands and cockleshells in their hats—peas, as likely as not, in their shoes—as in those Ages of Faith to which his sermons look back with such patronizing melancholy. He pictured the wayfarers huddled round the exceedingly uncomfortable gas fire at the Dragon of Wantly, regaling each other with stories more variegated and (let us hope) less sprightly than the ones told by Chaucer's cronies at the Tabard. He would even, but for the cold incredulity of the chapter, have erected a hostel in which the poorer of these multitudinous worshippers might have spent the night, after the Roman model.

It cannot be said that the results encouraged such optimism. People did indeed come, by twos and threes, from Puddingdale, from Courcy, from Uffley, from Silverbridge, from Hoggle End; but there was no general influx, unless you count the school girls from The Laburnums at Silverbridge, where once the Misses Prettyman taught, and Grace Crawley was visited by her obstinate lover, Major Grantley. But most of the half-crowns were contributed either by people from Barchester itself, and in particular by those old ladies who were seldom out of the Cathedral in any case, or by the tourists who habitually visit Barchester in the summer months, and were not much more frequent in this August than in any other. Some of these last, it must be confessed, hardly added to the

seemliness of the general effect; the gentlemen wearing cut-shorts and the ladies beach-pyjamas, owing to the extreme heat of the weather; and Mr. Bunce assures me that he had to keep a watchful eye over them, several having come all the way through the porch before they were induced to extinguish their cigarettes. I need hardly say that Mr. Bunce did not submit to the pyjamas without a struggle, and besought the Dean to let him send away the wearers of them to vest themselves more suitably to the occasion. But Dr. Letham Allcombe, as might have been expected, was plasticine, and still the beach-pyjamas came in. Nor was his moderation unrewarded; Barchester was enabled to contribute a total of nearly two hundred pounds towards the necessities of the unemployed.

"The hussies!" said Mr. Bunce indignantly, watching two young ladies who were making good the deficiencies in their toilet as they waited for the Dean to shew them round. (It must be admitted that Mr. Bunce's view of the situation is not wholly altruistic; since, during the fortnight of the "pilgrimage," one of the chapter is always in attendance to do the honours, and there is no remuneration for the vergers.) "Tell you what it is, sir," he continued in an undertone, "the Cathedral isn't what it was in my young days. Then, there was morning and evening prayer sung every day, and you wouldn't wish to hear it sung sweeter than what it was in Mr. Harding's time. I won't say

as many people came, but those as did come came to pray, and knew what they was to be let in for. Now, sir, if you'll believe me, it's High Mass this Sunday and the Baptist minister preaching the next, and boy scouts with kettledrums the next, and massed choirs—women, some of 'em—the next; and if you put your nose inside the building during the week, as likely as not you'll find yourself in the middle of a bathing-beauty competition like this here. The truth of the matter is, sir, that people won't go to church to say their prayers, not nowadays, and you have to wheedle them in by all manner of stunts. Now, if Archdeacon Grantley——” but, as I have found occasion to explain already, Mr. Bunce is prejudiced.

The swing-door opened, and two more young ladies appeared, evidently engaged on a walking tour. Their bald eyebrows, their artificial tan, their raddled lips and finger-nails gave them a kind of conventual uniformity with the other young ladies of their period, and their lower limbs, where these were not visible, were encased in the most exiguous possible form of cut-shorts. They looked round in obvious astonishment at the massive pillars of the nave, the groined roof soaring up into its dark recesses, the brilliant hangings of cramoisie over the communion-tables in the side-aisle. Then one of them gave utterance to her thoughts.

“Christ!” she observed; “what a peep-show!”

The Dean hurried up, all smiles. "Welcome, ladies!" he said, "good day to you both. We were just about to begin our round of inspection by paying a visit to the monument of Mrs. Proudie."

THE END





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